

# RELIGION IN LIFE

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## Kagawa Speaks

"So to us  
Today  
Christ gives eternal life,—  
He who was crucified,  
And triumphed,  
Through the power of Love.  
Our Lord is in our hearts  
And flesh and blood,  
Helping us always.

"Why should we speak  
Of 'Christianity'  
As though it were  
Dead doctrine?  
Jesus is not dead;  
Still as of old,  
He seeks his sheep.

"For where the Spirit of the Cross  
Shines deep  
Within their hearts,  
God's saints  
Await the Day of Glory  
And his Kingdom  
Has already come."

—From *Songs From the Land of Dawn*, by Toyohiko Kagawa  
and other Japanese poets. Friendship Press, 1949.

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# The Divinity of Christ

FREDERICK C. GRANT

**I BELIEVE IN GOD . . . and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord.**  
—The Apostles' Creed.

*We believe in one God . . . and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God; begotten of his Father before all worlds, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made; being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, and was made man. . . .*—The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.<sup>1</sup>

Present-day studies of New Testament theology as a rule give ample recognition to the variety in the thought, the practice, and the belief of first-century Christianity. At the same time the underlying unity—both unity of origin and also of general content—of these various expressions of New Testament practice and teaching is now coming to be more fully recognized.

In Heinrich Weinell's *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*<sup>2</sup> a threefold classification, derived from the general history of religion, was applied to the doctrinal developments of the New Testament period: these were the eschatological, the ethical, and the esthetic or mystical types of the *religion of redemption*. One has only to think of the primitive apocalyptic, the Pauline, and the Johannine types of religious thought in New Testament Christianity to see how the classification applies.

In the course of the later development of Christian thought and belief, it was the mystical-sacramental emphasis that became dominant, though for a time the ethical was uppermost. But the chronological order is true only as a generalization. (a) The apocalyptic element—or orientation—survived for a long time: the impetus of the "Little Apocalypse" (ca. 40 A.D.), the Apocalypse of John (ca. 95), the Gospel of Matthew

<sup>1</sup> A. Hahn, *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der Alten Kirche*, 3d ed., Breslau, 1897, §144.

<sup>2</sup> *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments: Die Religion Jesu und des Urchristentums*, 4th ed., Tübingen, 1928.

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(perhaps a little later), the Christian redaction of IV Ezra and of other Jewish apocalypses, the final outburst in Montanism about 180 A.D., the final quiescence of Chiliasm in the time of Origen, with sporadic later recrudescences here and there throughout Christian history—these mark its history. (b) The ethical, strongly marked in Paul in spite of his religious theory (the Christian life was to be almost purely pneumatic, Spirit-guided!), and in a quite different way in the Synoptic Gospels, the Pastoral and Catholic epistles, Clement of Rome, the *Didache* (also apocalyptic in outlook!), and the whole of later Christian teaching—these are its record. (c) The mystical-sacramental emphasis or interpretation was also early in origin—it is certainly present in Paul, and may even have been found in early Gentile Christianity before Paul; it rose to its full height in the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle of John, left some trace in Hebrews, and slowly won its dominant position in Catholic theology with the triumph of Catholic doctrine over Gnostic (though with some surviving Gnostic features) in Irenaeus, Clement, Origen, the later Greek Fathers, and the Eastern liturgies.

It would not be correct to say that the apocalyptic interpretation of the gospel dominated the *first* century, the ethical the *second*, and the mystical-sacramental the *third* and later centuries; yet this loose generalization contains a certain amount of truth—at least there is some evidence in its support.

Our Christianity today, in all its varieties, is the result of the interplay of many factors in the long course of Christian thought, with many survivals, revivals, and reverses along the way. In general, Catholic thought more strongly emphasizes what Weinel called the mystical-sacramental interpretation, Protestant the ethical. And yet nowhere, either today or in the past, has any one type been wholly pure or completely dominant. There has been variety, from the very beginning, and there has also been cross-fertilization—as in nature, a really valuable and indispensable process.

This variety in emphasis and interpretation, so important for a genuinely catholic and comprehensive understanding of Christianity as the final or absolute religion, may be traced (as we have seen) almost to its earliest origin. There were apocalyptists, legalists, Hellenists, perhaps even mystics in the Christian church from the very first generation. Certainly those who handed down the traditions of the life and teaching of Jesus represented more than one religious point of view. They handed down the tradition *because* of the meaning Christ had for them; and this

meaning conditioned their interpretation of the oral records of his teaching and the reported anecdotes from his life. That is what sets our problem; for there is not one single, dominant Christology in the Gospels, there are several. Not only is the Christology of the Fourth Gospel entirely different from that found in the Synoptics: we cannot even say the "one" which is found in the Synoptics, for there are several—e.g., the "Son of God" Christology in Mark and the temptation narrative, the "Wisdom" Christology of one or two passages in Q, the "Second Moses" type found in Matthew and especially in M, the "Anointed" type in Luke, the prophetic in L, the "Servant" type found in the first half of Acts and elsewhere, and the "Son of Man" (apocalyptic) type found in secondary passages in Mark and repeated (from Mark) in the later Synoptics, Luke and Matthew.

Obviously, these doctrinal viewpoints are represented by the titles given to Jesus, either during his earthly life or after his resurrection and exaltation, by the devotion and faith of his followers—had he claimed them all, no consistent understanding of his own person would have been possible for himself; and had he claimed any one of them, the others either would not have been applied to him or could have been applied only by complete reinterpretation: yet of that reinterpretation there is no evidence. His own term of self-reference seems to have been simply "son of man," i.e., "this one," or "I myself."

It is this richness and variety in even the primitive Christology (we have not mentioned the "Man from heaven" concept found in Paul, or the "heavenly High Priest" of Hebrews, or the "Logos" Christology of John), which enables us to view them in their proper perspective, as the work of early Christian faith, hope, and worship.

They are but broken lights of thee,  
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

The simple procedure of tracing back each Christological title to Jesus himself will not do, then. There has been interpretation—by others—from the very start. He did not "claim" to be "God from God, Light from Light": he did not claim it, but he was it and is it. The historical Jesus did not say, "I am the Logos incarnate"; nevertheless he was, for the religious faith of the Fourth Evangelist, the creative Reason or Word of God himself who had not merely "assumed" human nature, as a Docetist might grant, but had "become" flesh (John 1:14).

It is a commonplace of modern study of the New Testament to view the Fourth Gospel as a dramatization of the meaning Jesus had come to

possess for Christian faith almost a century after his death. In other words, it is an interpretation, or reinterpretation, of the historical tradition of his life and teaching. But the real subject of this dramatic reinterpretation is not the historical Jesus who had lived and taught in Galilee and Judea in the days of the governor Pilate: the real subject is the eternal, cosmic Christ, the object of faith, present *now* with his followers, known and loved and obeyed *now* by those who believed and trusted and committed themselves to him. It is not the bare "historical Jesus," but the *interpreted* Jesus of history who is the hero of the Fourth Gospel.<sup>3</sup>

But if this is a true view of the Gospel of John, the principle cannot be denied when we turn back to the Synoptics. They also set forth interpretation, i.e., the church's faith, though the dramatization has not gone so far, nor is it moving in the same direction as that of the philosophical-mystical-allegorical Logos doctrine found in John. Their interpretation is closer to the actual history as it had taken place in Galilee and Jerusalem in the third decade of the first century. But the reason for this is that the church (or churches) which had handed down the tradition they contain had clung somewhat more tenaciously to the primitive terminology and ideas than was true of the circle in which the Gospel of John arose. Yet even here, in the Synoptic Gospels, a process of change and development is reflected.

To begin with, every recollection of Jesus' actual life upon earth, every memory of every incident or saying, was seen in the fresh, vividly revealing light of his resurrection and exaltation as glorified Messiah, as "the Son of Man who is in heaven" or "at the right hand of God." Furthermore, it was inconceivable that he had not foreseen the events that were to transpire, that death had overtaken him unawares, that his life had been wrested from him or that he had not voluntarily laid it down—and for the very purpose for which, it was now clear, his death had in truth been laid down. If the meaning men found in his life, death, and resurrection was now seen—in the light of actual events—to be foreshadowed in the law, the prophets, and the psalms, must not all this have been clear to Jesus himself? The disciples recognized it well enough after his resurrection (hence the language of the Emmaus story in Luke, and many a hint in John and Mark); but for Jesus himself must it not all have been clear *before* his resurrection, i.e., before he went up to Jerusalem to die? And must he not, then, have fulfilled, consciously and purposely, the Old Testament predictions of him—as Son of Man, Messiah,

<sup>3</sup> Cf. my article, "The Christ of the Gospels," *RELIGION IN LIFE*, X [1941], pp. 430ff.

David's Son, the suffering Servant of the Lord, the unknown Martyr of the Psalms, "the" Prophet like Moses, the inaugurator of the New Covenant, the Messenger of the Covenant, and every other ancient and mysterious announcement of a Coming One?

This *motif*, the fulfillment of Scripture, was a powerful factor in the development of the Christian theology, from the very beginning, and the Synoptic Gospels reflect it on every page. The Christians "searched the scriptures daily," to find—not "whether these things were so," but—to find new evidence that what they knew from their own experience to be true had been foreknown, foreshadowed all along by the divine prophetic Spirit. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

The interpretation is something like that which Plato gives to the teaching of Socrates. No doubt Plato was Socrates' disciple, and built upon his teaching. But the question arises, how much of the Platonic Socrates' discourse—and character—is historical? And how much of it is Plato's own later interpretation of the meaning of Socrates' teaching? Present-day Platonic scholars incline to credit more of Plato's doctrine to his master than was formerly the fashion of scholarship—especially the doctrine set forth in the earlier or Socratic dialogues. And yet one need only to turn to Xenophon (not to the caricature in Aristophanes) to see how an intelligent writer could give an account of Socrates which completely left out of the reckoning all that was deepest, most significant, most enduring in his life and teaching. No doubt Plato's account is a portrait, not a photograph; a dramatization, not a stenographic record of his utterances; an interpretation, not a biography; nevertheless it is a *truer* account of Socrates than Xenophon's or any one else's.

But this illustration does not take us all the way. For Plato's Socrates is no divine being, is not the object of faith, worship, trust. For the writers of the Gospels, as for those who handed down the oral tradition, Jesus was divine, and the variety of titles used in describing him—some of them being attributed to Jesus himself—are all of them attempts to describe and identify him, indeed in some degree to explain his person and his career. The Gospels belong to the literature of religion, not of philosophy. In truth, they belong to the literature of Christian faith, distinctively and peculiarly so; for there are no other books, in all the world's literature of religion, really comparable to these four tiny volumes. All the same, it helps us in understanding them, and in gaining a clearer view of the historical Jesus, to realize that they are interpretations. What they give us is the Jesus of tradition, already interpreted—from the outset



—by the faith of his followers and believers. It is the Christ of faith, Jesus interpreted by the church, which the Gospels enshrine, not a “pure,” noncommittal, completely objective “Jesus of history.” In fact, there *never was* a purely objective “Jesus of history,” in the sense that faith had no concern with him. If there had ever been such a Jesus, we may be sure we would never have heard anything about him.

To state more briefly what we have tried to say, thus far: there is variety in interpretation from the beginning of the Gospel tradition, and this variety all bears testimony to the superlative meaning which Christ’s life, teaching, death, and resurrection possessed for those who believed in him and had found the divine salvation revealed and achieved in him. But you cannot *prove* this by the records, or by appeal to prophecy, or even by ever-renewed, ever-deepened interpretation. “Spiritual things are spiritually apprehended.” The author of the Fourth Gospel saw this clearly and stated it forcefully: “The flesh profits nothing; it is the Spirit that gives life.” That is to say, no interpretation or reinterpretation will mean much to anyone who has not the prior disposition of faith, or at least a favorable impression, and a growing insight, a realization that there was more to the life of Jesus than the eye could take in at a glance: “This was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.” We tend to forget this, and to assume that the divinity of Christ can be somehow proved, if only adequate data can be discovered, or clever enough arguments advanced. Perhaps we would do well to listen to Kierkegaard at this point:

What the Jews, and later many, asked of Christ: that he should prove his divinity, is preposterous; for, if he really *were* the Son of God the proof would be ridiculous, just as ridiculous as though a man were to prove his existence, since in this case, Christ’s existence and his divinity are the same—and if he were an impostor he would certainly have been able to enter into the character well enough to see that the moment he proved his own divinity he would have been giving himself the lie.<sup>4</sup>

It was the great rediscovery of the Protestant Reformation that Christianity is a *faith*, that one can really know Christ only when he approaches him in an attitude of self-committal, obedience, total response of mind, affections, and will. Spiritual truth must be spiritually discerned. “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether I speak of myself.” This is not to rule out the possibility of a “natural” theology in the primary area of theism, viz., the existence of God, and

<sup>4</sup> *The Journals of Søren Kierkegaard*, tr. by Alexander Dru, Oxford, 1938, p. 4, under date of April 19, 1835.

of a general principle of providence controlling nature and history, the sovereignty of justice, the full authority of those motives we designate as social, and so on. But the generality of men will never get beyond these bare rudiments without faith; and certainly no one will discover who Christ is, in truth, without faith, or ever lay hold upon the salvation offered us in him, apart from that complete response of self-committal which the Bible (chiefly St. Paul) describes by this word.

The divinity of Christ is accordingly a matter of faith, not of demonstration; and the value of earlier Christologies, all the way from the earliest interpretations of which we have any record (those reflected in the titles used in the Gospel tradition) to the fourth- and fifth-century creeds with their refined and precise metaphysical terminology—the value of all these Christologies lies in their varied testimony to the centrality and the finality of Christ *for Christian faith*. It is no use trying to enforce them by ecclesiastical authority, without regard to prior faith and understanding on the part of believers; for without faith in Christ they cannot be comprehended, not even in a vague, general way. They rule out misinterpretations; but neither the true interpretation nor the misinterpretation, nor even the general drift of the argument, means anything apart from actual faith within the believer himself. This principle needs to be affirmed, and reaffirmed, as much today as ever before. We all recognize the indispensable priority of faith, as a general rule; then we proceed to forget all about it, and write our books and sermons, and talk to people, as if it did not exist, and as if rational proof could succeed in demonstrating the divine nature, personality, office, and work of Christ. The simple-minded believer, who loves and follows the Lord Jesus with all his heart and soul, has something the theologian—alas—sometimes lacks!

But, it will be asked, does not Jesus' "Messianic consciousness" put him on the side of those who would prove his divinity? Undoubtedly, if you can be sure what that term means. But "Messianic" is used in a vague way, by many persons, to cover a wide range of ideas. If it means that Jesus was aware of a closeness to God, of a union of his will with the Father's will, of his purposes with God's, of a mission which carried authority to speak and to act in the name of God and as his representative or agent, there is ample evidence in the Gospels for this—but it is not specifically "Messianic."

If, on the other hand, the term implies the fanaticism and obsession, the megalomania, the crude self-delusion of one who expected to rule

over a restored Jewish nation, or over the whole world; then discovered that his dream was about to be shattered, but nevertheless persisted, determined to die, if necessary, in order to achieve his end, and by dying to force the hand of God who would then act to restore him and enthrone him in a kingdom centered in Jerusalem—everything in Jesus' own life, character, and teaching *forbids* us to take such a view. And yet, strangely enough, that amazing caricature of the mind of Christ has been popular in many circles for over forty years now, and it is looked upon as somehow a support to the orthodox doctrine of the nature of Christ. Make him superhuman, at all costs, even if you make him a madman! But that is neither the Jesus of Christian faith *nor* the Jesus of history. Paul knows nothing of such a figure; the Fourth Evangelist knows no such figure—he “reinterprets” the historical Jesus, but his reinterpretation does not start with a lunatic. The rest of the New Testament knows nothing of such fanaticism, the delusion of a first-century Mahdi. The Gospel sources do not reflect it. Only the imagination of modern “thorough-going” eschatology, defying not only all source-criticism of the Gospels but also all Christian devotion, can create such a figure and set it up in opposition—as the only alternative—to thorough-going skepticism.

The truth is, the *motivation* behind the Christology of the New Testament, behind every title applied to Christ, is *religious*, from the beginning. (This was not the only motivation: a political motive was also possible, as we see in the case of Bar Koziba; similarly an eschatology might be motivated by other than religious concerns, e.g., astronomical, as in the “Book of Heavenly Luminaries,” in I Enoch.) And the New Testament assumes, from the outset, that the true nature or person of Christ is to be apprehended by faith, not demonstrated by proof. This applies to Jesus' own words. He does not *claim* Messiahship, or the rank of *The Son of Man*, or the office of inaugurator or head of the Kingdom of God: but he acts with perfect confidence as God's spokesman: “You have heard that it was said to those of old . . . but I say unto you.” It is his closeness to God, his certainty of God, his union with God (which the later creeds stressed) that comes to expression in every act and word; and this union of will and of mind is not Messianic, save in the broad, general sense of preparation for the coming “Messianic” Kingdom or Reign of God; instead it is prophetic, moral, religious, and implies far more directly what we westerners are accustomed to call a “metaphysical” union of human nature with the divine than the Messianic concept implies. Some lines of Emerson, on Michelangelo, help us to think more clearly of this:



The hand that rounded Peter's dome,  
 And groined the aisles of Christian Rome,  
 Wrought in a sad sincerity—  
 Himself from God he could not free.

Only, in place of "sad sincerity," we see in Jesus the joyful acceptance of this union, the unquestioning, unhesitating action and speech of one who was inseparably, if ineffably, one with God in word and deed, in thought and motive. There never was any other man quite like Jesus. That is why it is so hard to define him, even to describe him. All other men have analogies, resemblances, but Jesus was unique.

If the original discovery—or rediscovery—of early Protestantism was the saving nature of faith, and the essential nature of Christianity as faith, it is also true that the great defect of modern Protestantism is the widespread neglect of worship, though its place is central and indispensable in the religious life. Too much of our theology, instead of springing fresh and vital from immediate contact with God—not from the *idea* of God but from God himself, directly known in joyful, quickening experience, in submission, penitence, obedience and renewal—is now too much "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," a merely reflective, subjective, intellectual product.<sup>5</sup>

Man must think—that goes without saying. But the center of his being is not an intellectual activity; it is a vital connection with the One who is eternal but unseen, beyond and above us; who is not only the eternal Not-ourselves who "makes for righteousness" but who has taken us to himself as our Creator and Redeemer, "in whom we live and move and have our being"; who not only created the world but rules it; who not only redeemed the world, once, but still redeems *us*. Apart from him we are nothing, the ephemeral creatures of a day, cast up by nature in its endless kaleidoscopic permutations, creatures finite and sinful, "without God and without hope in the world"; but *with* him we are "the sons of God and heirs of eternal life." *How* this comes to pass is through the divine self-revelation, the divine redemption, the divine renewal, God taking us to himself and, in Christ, "reconciling us to himself." The realization of all this takes place, chiefly, if not solely, in worship; its full working-out is piety, the life in grace. And it is the tragedy of much contemporary religion that worship is too often neglected, while the very name of piety is a coin that circulates at a heavy discount in this secularized

<sup>5</sup> It is hard to see how theology can escape being intellectual; but a sound and fruitful theology will be in close contact with both worship and piety. Otherwise it is destined in time to become arid, sterile, and even nonreligious.

age—people neglect the one and suspect the other. But for vital religion both are equally indispensable. And it is out of a religion of worship and piety that the New Testament arose, with its fundamental doctrines of the manifestation of God in Christ and the realization of his Kingdom through one who was his Messiah yet not his Messiah—for he was so much more: the Son of God, the Savior, the Redeemer, the Son of Man, the future Judge, the Head of the Church, the Eternal Word, God himself veiled in human flesh.

That is the soil out of which grows the mighty oak, the central affirmation of the Christian faith, the divinity of Christ. It cannot grow out of bare rock, on the hard, unyielding surface of skepticism, or in wet or shifting sand, the shallow opinion of a wholly this-worldly, materialistic, or man-centered view of life, lapped unceasingly by the recurrent tides of change. Its home is the forest of faith, almost wholly cut down by modern man in his attempt to dominate the world and extend his own self-centered "civilization"; but that forest was once rich and fertile, and its destruction has disturbed the whole balance of nature, and left bare and unproductive wide areas where once life was manifold, various, teeming. It is a simple fact of history that the "world of faith" which produced early Christianity, into which Christ was born and where his church grew up, was vastly more religious than the modern. It had its areas of superstition and its darker backgrounds, but it was a world where belief in God—or gods—was all but universal, and it had been so since the dawn of history. Our world is different—and the major difficulty today with the doctrine of the divinity of Christ is not, really, with the person of Christ but with the concept of "divinity"; the category of "divine" is all but meaningless for most men—we do not know what we mean by the word. But men did know, once; and to recover that meaning we must go back to the first century, to the New Testament, and learn again what it means to think of God—to think of God upon the basis of the direct experience of God. And if it is to remain clear to us for any length of time we must also have a fresh realization of that meaning in our own experience—in frequent worship and in the daily practice of Christian piety.

# The Church's One Privation

W. E. SANGSTER

## I

I CAN EASILY IMAGINE the scorn with which a cynic might read my title. "The church's *one* privation?" he would say. "I can think of twenty-one. The church needs revival. It needs power, a new apologetic, a stronger thinking, a more ebullient joy, able leaders, a closer unity. . . . It is foolish to speak of the church's *one* privation."

None the less, I hold to my title. I have come to believe that there is one deep privation on which most others are pendent. It is *holiness*—a musty word to many people but clear enough in connotation despite its mustiness. I mean that quality of life which one has seen and felt in those rare souls who are good "in the inward parts" and who unconsciously remind one of Jesus Christ.

Most of the things the critics convict the church of lacking are related to this primal need. It is said that the church needs *revival*, but what fosters revival more than holiness? When Lacordaire cried, "O God, give us some saints," it was of revival he was thinking. Why did the soul-starved people of France a century ago stream to Ars to consult a priest whose ignorance of formal theology was a byword among his brethren? Because the priest was a saint, and even worldlings know a saint when they see one. It is some dim apprehension of saints as the sappers of God's advancing host which leads church leaders to say at times that a mission inside the church must precede any attack upon those who never darken her doors.

Spiritual *power* is another fruit of holiness. Holiness is begotten in us by the Holy Spirit, and he is the Spirit of Power, the Lord and Giver of Life. How long could the world really ignore a holy church? The church fails of impressiveness in the world largely because there is not enough difference between the people inside and those outside to strike a contrast. Many an unbeliever looks at his church-going neighbor and concludes that he can live as evenly without a weekly diet of worship. He is not struck by his obvious serenity nor by his expert mastery of life.

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Both *atheism* and *agnosticism* would meet an answer in holiness. The answer might not be philosophically adequate but it would be personally challenging. Saints make it well-nigh impossible for those who meet them constantly to take up their permanent abode in unbelief. Voltaire bore willing testimony to the effect upon him of meeting the "seraphic Fletcher" of Madeley, and tens of thousands of men unknown to fame have found that they could not dismiss the Christian faith as a fable if only by the haunting recollection of someone they knew in whom the life of Christ really shone.

If it is said that the church fails most in all countries by not providing *national leaders* of spiritual stature, it will not be denied that where a statesman has this added quality of "the God-intoxicated life" his influence outruns all normal computation. He is known to want nothing for himself. The depressing suspicion the masses have that their leaders always make their own rake-off from public life (in fame, or political power, if not in money) seems not to attach to a man with this quality of life. So Wilberforce freed the slaves in the British Empire, and Gandhi—if I may take an illustration of a Christian outside the church—held the allegiance of millions, though his mistakes in statecraft (to use his own phrase) were, at times, of Himalayan proportions.

As for *church reunion*, the problem of disunion hardly exists for the saints. They know one another across the barriers of denomination. Deep calleth unto deep. It would be hard, in some ways, to conceive ecclesiastical positions more opposed than that of Dr. R. W. Dale and Cardinal Newman. Yet, in the Birmingham of the eighties, they were towering figures and had a penetrating understanding of each other which bewildered at times the militant denominationalists. The lives of the saints do not make unnecessary the work of the artificers of reunion, who seek to fashion a formula which will be "fair all round." But the saints are not waiting on the ecclesiastics: the ecclesiastics have to catch up with the saints. Living near the cross, these rare souls live near to one another. Being intimate with the same Lord, they meet at a depth and know each other as friends.

Nor can it be seriously doubted that the lack of ebullient *joy*, and a just recognition of the place of beauty in life (which has been urged at times against all churches in the Puritan tradition), is answered at the deepest level by the presence of true holiness. Joy is an essential ingredient of the holy life. A robust Protestant, conning over the conditions the Roman Church lays down as necessary for fulfillment by any candidate for

canonization, might find the stress on the supernatural a little overpowering, but he ought not to find fault with the insistence upon joy. The saint has joy. Von Hügel may be right that the absence of joy in Newman will defeat the hopes of those who seek his canonization, but a saint can't be sour. He can't even be normally solemn. Serious, maybe!—but not normally *solemn*. He has joy, and he spreads beauty all around.

A small boy from the provinces made his first trip to London and crammed the day with an orgy of sight-seeing. His father was his guide. Late home and heavy for sleep, he was too tired to tell his mother of the wonders he had seen. As she put him to bed and pressed him to tell her all about it, he drowsily replied: "We went into Westminster Abbey and saw some saints on the windows. I don't know their names but the light came through them and made all the place beautiful . . ."

This is an oft-told story, but we need a repeated reminder that that is what the saints do. They let the light of heaven in upon our murky earth. Often they are obscure people. We may not know their names but they make all the place beautiful. More holiness is our great need. It would foster every precious thing we want. If there is any sense at all in reducing the church's multiplicity of need to singularity, it is to this that we must reduce it at the last. Whatever our chief concern may be for the Body of God, we might well say with Lacordaire, "O God, give us some saints." Revival, spiritual power, apologetics, leadership, reunion . . . all are related to sanctity. Indeed, if one had to reduce the business of the church in the world to one phrase, it would be hard to say anything more pertinent than that her supreme business is to make saints.

Is the aim clear and sharply focused? Do all the church's resources move to that end? Is the quest of sanctity understood in its individual and social relationships? Can it ever be self-consciously pursued—or must it always be a by-product? Have we let the wrong people monopolize this theme—and distort it? What did the Bishop mean who said, "We have come to dread everything associated with the mention of 'holiness'?"

To a consideration of these and related questions, let us turn our attention now.

## II

The best way to approach the positive exposition of this theme might be to distinguish the variant attitudes which are commonly taken towards this teaching and which, for one reason and another, we shall feel compelled to reject.



I. There are some who say that holiness in any robust sense is impossible on this earth and from any use of the word "perfection" they sharply recoil. "The only holiness we can ever have is imputed," they say, "and not imparted." There is something to be forgiven in the best thing we have ever done. If we think we have holiness, it is a dangerous illusion: if we think we see it in others, we are sadly mistaken. "Sin is so woven into us," they argue, "that not even grace can master it." Some go so far as to say that the image of God in man is not so much defaced as destroyed.

The idea that grace is powerless to bring us to any kind of terrestrial perfection is laid down, of course, in the Westminster Catechism. The Catechism says: "No man is able, either of himself, or by any grace received in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God; but doth daily break them in thought, word and deed." Many students after reading a couple of volumes like, say, B. B. Warfield's *Perfectionism*, have rather hastily concluded that any way to holiness except by toilsome self-effort is more magical than religious and had better be left to the cranks.

Into the vexed question of mortal perfection I do not choose to go now, except to remark in passing that no man has a right to put a limit to what the grace of God can do. What vanity is it which leads men to say that God *can't* do this or *won't* do that? If there is a terrible danger in people speaking lightly of perfection (and, of course, there is), is there not a terrible danger also (and one of which Paul seemed more sharply aware) that we shall mentally provide for sin: use, indeed, the conviction of its inevitability to weaken our claims upon emancipating grace, and sin because we feel we must? To the faithful in Rome the Apostle said: "Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof," and the first provisions of the flesh are always in the mind. God can do more with sin than forgive it. Charles Wesley taught tens of thousands of bestial men and women, gloriously changed in the eighteenth century, to sing with conviction:

He breaks the power of canceled sin,  
And sets the prisoner free.

If anyone wants to say that that is still not perfection, he will not deny that in multitudes it was holiness. These transfigured souls "willed one will" with God. They glowed with the fire divine. They seemed alight within. Most of them were simple, obscure people, but it could be said of them, as it was said later of Edward King, Bishop of Lincoln:

It was light that he carried with him, light that shone through him—light that glowed from him. The room was lit into which he entered. It was as if we had fallen under a streak of sunlight that flickered and danced and laughed, and burned all to colour and to gold. Those eyes of his were an illumination. . . . The heart ever leaped as it caught sight of that dear face. . . . Was there ever such a face, so gracious, so winning, so benignant, so tender? It made no effort to be striking, or marked, or peculiar, or special. It possessed just the typical beauty that should, of right, belong to the human countenance. It seemed to say, This is what a face is meant to be. This is the face a man would have if he were, really, himself. This is the face that love would normally wear. We felt as if we had been waiting for such a face to come and meet us—a face that would simply reveal how deep is the goodness of which humanity is capable.

God can do this with ordinary men and women. The honest student must disabuse his mind of any preconceptions that it *can't* be done.

2. In the second place, we must be on guard against the people who claim to have this quality of life and yet plainly repel us. They confuse sanctity and sanctimoniousness. The holy life, as they conceive it, is a bundle of negatives. The way to it, so they believe, is chopping things off. They don't do *this*, and they don't do *that*. They don't go *here* and they don't go *there*. No music unless it is sacred. No book unless it is "improving." No fun or frolic, mirth or gaiety. All these they have handed over to the devil. Life for them appears to be less and less, whereas God intended it to be more and more.

Whether or not that tendency is in any one of us may be tested, I think, by our reaction to that incident at the close of the life of Father Faber, a man with many marks of sanctity. He was dying, and in his last hours drifted in and out of consciousness. In one lucid interval, aware that he was about to embark, he asked for the last sacraments. "You've had them, Father," they reminded him. "You can't have the last sacraments twice."

The dying man actually laughed. "All right," he said, "if I can't have the last sacraments, pass me *Pickwick Papers*."

People fostering the wrong kind of sanctity are mildly shocked by a story like that. It doesn't quite fit their ideas of the "holy."

So much the worse for their ideas. Of all the sad confusions which have beset this teaching, the virtual identification of sanctity and sanctimonious is perhaps the worst.

3. A third group who have done unwitting harm to this teaching are the people who would make a cult of holiness; lifting it out of the world and making it the occupation only of conventions, retreats, and religious house parties. Holiness is no use if you can't live with it. The

natural home of holiness is not a convention but a kitchen; not a retreat but a workshop; not a house party but an office—which is not to belittle for one moment the divine counsel, “Come ye apart and rest awhile”; but it *is* to challenge the spiritual gourmands who tag around from one religious orgy to another and would make the day’s work all mealtimes.

Mr. Harry Jeffs, in his book, *Press, Preachers and Politicians*, tells of an occasion when he stayed at a seaside boardinghouse and learned from the landlady’s daughter that she belonged to the Holiness Mission in the town. “It is the only place in this town, Mr. Jeffs,” she said earnestly, “where the pure gospel is preached.” Then she added that she had made such progress in the teaching that further progress seemed impossible. Finally, she staggered Jeffs by saying, “I simply couldn’t sin however hard I try.”

Her mother overheard the remark. Mentioning it privately to her boarder later, the landlady said, “That sounds all right in the drawing room but you should hear her in the kitchen when we want her to wash up.”

Baron Von Hügel used to tell of a certain convent known to him into which an old charwoman went every week to help with the washing. She was a Methodist, deeply attached to her class meeting and to the hymns of Charles Wesley. A friendship sprang up between the washerwoman and the Mother Superior of the convent, and often they would talk by the tub of the things of God. They had an understanding of one another in the depths of religion which overleapt all details of phrasing and pierced beyond the outward forms of faith. Addressing her flock one day in the chapel, the Mother Superior told them of the woman who came in to wash the linen. “Sisters,” she said, “we are not worthy to kiss her feet.”

Holiness is at home by the washtub. It has its place, of course, in the chapel. No one of judgment denies that. But it must not be *incarcerated* in a chapel—or in a convention. Rome knows that. Many of her saints are not technically “religious.”

It is this awful danger of making holiness a cult and compartmentalizing religion which explains the sad phenomena of men passionate in the pursuit of personal holiness and, at the same time, bad employers and risky people with whom to do business. The harm these men have done to religion is incalculable. Hypocrites most of them were not. An awful dichotomy divided their lives. In private life they were often impeccable and utterly sincere in their pursuit of goodness. But business was war and



had to be fought according to the hard rules. The same man who would give a million to charity would crush his business rival with a warrior's fierce joy. Of the hundred examples which might be taken of this well-known tendency among the good, the early Quakers might serve our purpose now. The Friends now have so deservedly high a reputation for their concern about the social gospel and the treatment of employees that it is instructive to remember that they also stumbled a little before the inner light burned clear.

Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith came of Quaker stock, and claims that some of his forebears were saints, but the sanctity did not affect the business life of all of them. He says:

The notion seems never to have occurred to them of applying the principles of their religion to the treatment of their employees. Business was business; it was a world apart without the slightest relation to the heavenly Kingdom; and this merciless tradition filled the warehouse where I worked with an atmosphere which, little by little, I found almost stifling. Every one of the employees lived in the fear of instant dismissal and in the hope of profiting by the disgrace of others.

A heavy, blustering bully was the tyrant of the warehouse. He worked in a glass-enclosed apartment whither any wretch who had been caught in error was immediately summoned and subjected to a vituperation of vilification which reverberated loudly through the office and was listened to by the other wretches with malignant joy and hope.

Our path becomes clearer as we recognize the roads which are "no roads." Virtually to deny the possibility of robust holiness is false to the New Testament; it is tantamount to making mental provision for sin. To prostitute the ideal, however, and claim perfection when guilty of sins which a worldling would repudiate, is patently false also: it has made the bare mention of "holiness" odorous in the nostrils of decent men. To make the pursuit of the ideal a cult is mistaken also. The segregated life (whether in the Roman Catholic convent or the Protestant convention) is not only not necessary for attainment but carries with it peculiar dangers. It denies the "wholeness" of holiness and casts doubt on our Lord's intention to give us life and give it to us more abundantly.

Recognizing these dangers, how may we strike out on a path likely to prove "the way of holiness" and in which the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein?

### III

The task is really twofold: one for the theologian and one for the working minister. One part must be largely beaten out in the schools; the other in the pulpits. Both will coalesce in time.

The severely theological task must concern itself with questions like these: What is the *summum bonum* of this mortal life? Is it God's will that we attain it? In what sense, if any, is perfection possible for men and women now?

Sharp definitions are needed of words employed with multiple meanings. What do we mean by "sin"? Is "unconscious sin" as contradictory as "square circle"? Is the distinction between "sin" and "sinfulness" basic to this whole matter? Is the word "perfect" as incapable of taking an adjective as the word "unique"? It seems certain that whole areas of disagreement and mental confusion on this subject could be reduced by good work on definitions alone.

But all this is only clearing the ground. What inviting theological work awaits the man who will seriously compare Catholic and Protestant spirituality! Is Reformation theology deficient in ethical intensity? Dr. Cadoux, militant Protestant theologian that he was, was inclined to admit so much.<sup>1</sup> Or is the precise reverse the truth? In their immense stress on the supernatural, do not the Catholic writers obscure the ethical, or relegate it to a minor place? What led the Roman Church to canonize St. Benedict Joseph Labre, a verminous beggar who lived out of garbage cans and barely did a serious day's work in his life; or to rate so highly the Blessed Angela of Foligno, whom the Holy Spirit (so *she* said) loved her more than anybody else in her valley, and who thanked God devoutly for having removed her own mother? If the Protestant churches ever ventured on the difficult task of setting out the conditions a candidate for canonization must fulfil, what would those conditions be?

Nor would it be without theological interest to inquire where John Wesley came in the study of sanctity—not chiefly as a person (though he would be eminent there!) but as a teacher. Is Dr. George Croft Cell right when he says that Wesley effected "an original and unique synthesis of the Protestant ethic of grace with the Catholic ethic of holiness"? Most serious students of modern holiness sects (pro and con) believe that they stem down from John Wesley. Wesley's teaching has been badly mangled by some of them but, at the heart of their extravagances, they are often witnessing to something precious. There are some senses in which the idea of progress in sanctity is alien to Protestantism. One has "all a God can give," in germ at least, when one has faith. Certainly, sanctity is not an achievement but a gift. Never is it the fruit of

<sup>1</sup> C. J. Cadoux, *Catholicism and Christianity*. Dial Press, 1929, p. 77.

toilsome self-effort. Discipline is involved but never the discipline of attaining: only the discipline of keeping open to receive.

The conclusion may be hazarded that Protestant and Catholic spirituality are nearer to one another than denominational debaters believe. The sense of the thing points that way. All holiness is of God. The saints of all communions (as we have already noted) have a swift recognition and understanding of each other. They are drinking, at different points, of the same stream. It would be a boon to all who pant after God if there were a wider knowledge of what each has found, and all could share what all have learned.

#### IV

Until the theological debate is further advanced than it is at present, many thoughtful ministers will want to avoid segments of this absorbing but uncertain subject. Until some of the terms we have mentioned have been brought to sharper definition, and won common acceptance, men will hesitate to use them. Jesus said: "Be ye perfect . . ." but most men will either avoid the text or agree with Dr. Torrey that a false vocalization of the Aramaic has issued in a wrong translation. Perfection will be transferred by most of them from earth to heaven and from time to eternity.

But, whatever the preacher does about perfection, he cannot avoid dealing with holiness if he would preach a full gospel. To that high task his commission commits him, and he is a hireling and not a shepherd if he leaves it out. How, then, can he hold holiness attractively before his people? How can he incite them to its quest and inflame their hearts with longing to be good in the inward parts?

I suggest that he should go at it like this.

It isn't hard to prove that there are different levels of the Christian life. Without stratifying Christian experience overmuch, it is easy to win a general admission from a congregation that Christianity means little more to some people than one service a week at church, and often less than that. People living on this level may keep the common code of decency in the community but there is just nothing to indicate that they are in the great open secret of God. They worry, get irritable, show pride and jealousy, lose their temper, and (except for their visits to church) are quite undistinguishable from normal decent people who have no use for religion at all.

On the other hand, there are men and women who enjoy the quality of life which it has been the main interest of this article to expound: who

make righteousness winsome; who, when they come into a room, almost make it appear that another light has been turned on; and who unconsciously compel in people an ache to be like them.

Almost everybody has met one of these radiant souls. If a man cannot count them among his present acquaintances, he has tender memories: maybe, his mother belonged to this high order, his old Sunday-school teacher, or a minister he met in early life. Let the preacher stir those memories and inflame the latent desire after holiness which is in all men. Let him convince his hearers that there *is* a life (call it what you will) of blessed abiding in God, of constant victory over known sin, of power to communicate the gospel, and of unspeakable peace. Let him leave his people wondering for a while, "What hinders my enjoyment of this life?"

Then let him drive the ploughshare in, having already driven it deep into his own heart. Let him force them to face every habit of life which causes them even a moderate discomfort of conscience. Is it a tax return? Is it ill-temper in the home? Would one's business methods survive scrutiny? When he defends his economic theories with such heat, is it a defense of truth or panic concerning his own profits? Let the preacher urge his people to claim forgiveness again for every harbored sin and then hold before them a picture of how good God could make them. Let his picture keep the negatives in a minor place. Let it be positive with all the richness of life and the energy of love. Let him increase their holy ambitions by fresh and well-drawn recollections of the saints, and let him make them wise in the art of "moment-by-moment living."

Metaphors of surgical operations to eradicate sin forever in half an hour create more problems than they solve. The preacher will be advised to borrow (as Wesley did in his clearest moments) his figures of speech from breathing: moment-by-moment inbreathing of the Spirit: an outbreathing of the breath devitalized by use or tainted by a subconsciousness not yet completely interpenetrated by the Spirit of God.

So the preacher will lead his people on, and lead them best because he himself is deep in the life he extols. So holiness will come back to preaching and to the daily life of the Christian, and "the church's one privation" will be gloriously met.

# Palestine and Israel: A Review-Article

EDWIN E. CALVERLEY

THE ZIONISTS HAVE SUCCEEDED in establishing their State in Palestine and have made peace with their neighboring nations. Already the new government, called Israel, has been recognized by the most important nations of the world.

Nevill Barbour's book, *Palestine: Star or Crescent?* was published in America in 1947. Is it now out of date?

Even in 1947 the inclusion of the term "Crescent" in the title was not correct. The crescent is the exclusive symbol of the Muslims. Although the majority of the population of Palestine then were not Jews, a large part of that majority were not Muslim but Christian Arabs.

Moreover, the Arab League, on behalf of the Arab population of Palestine, never planned to set up a Muslim government there. "The Arabs were prepared to accept the existing Jewish community and give all Palestinians, of whatever religion or faith, full rights of citizenship within a Palestinian state." That sentence is a quotation in Mr. Barbour's book (p. 273) to present the Arab point of view as developed by Abdul Rahman Azzam Bey (now Pasha), Secretary-General of the Arab League, during his visit to London in the autumn of 1945. I heard him say the same thing in Cairo in the spring of that year. The Palestinian State was to be a modern secular democratic nation. Not a crescent nor a cross nor a combination of the two would symbolize such a government.

Whatever the symbol of the Palestinian State should be, the title of the book, if republished in 1949, could well be *Palestine and Israel*.

The book, as published in England in 1946, was called *Nisi Dominus*, and a flyleaf facing the title quotes from Psalms 127, "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it."

That title and reference may give grateful comfort to many pious people, Jews and others, for they will now say: "The house is built; the labor has not been in vain; therefore we may conclude that it is the Lord who has built it."

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But many other people, just as pious, will reject that conclusion and declare that worldly success, even the success that lasts for decades, is not what reveals the will of the Lord. These are people who learn the facts that precede, surround, and follow the fact of success. They study the principles that directed the result. Success is not their only nor their decisive criterion of the good will of God.

Barbour's book gives historical facts about Palestine, Zionism, and the Arabs. The author is not an expert developed by an intensive indoctrination course on the spot or elsewhere. He has long resided in the Middle East. He knows the languages of the sources of information, living and literary. He is a Briton and, as such, acceptable as a critic of the British Government. He tries to be fair to the Zionists, for his quotations from their literature are many and not brief. Yet his book has not pleased Zionists and their supporters. If only an impartial critic may judge and justly condemn, may any Zionist complain? Is not the Zionist ever an advocate? It is the facts presented in the book that make the strongest impression rather than the adjectives and opinions.

Facts about the wrongdoings of the Arabs are omitted and minimized, say these critics. The book contains more than enough of the admitted wrongdoings of the Zionists to sadden any reader. But the book was published before Zionist activities added many more and many worse evils to the record. Does not the adoption of the name "Israel" for the new state mean that the Zionists wish to free themselves of the ill repute their deeds have given to the name?

The world, including its many non-Zionist Jews, will rejoice if the new name indicates a new character. Great evil has been done in Palestine. The guilt may be shared by all and may be variously assigned. But great harm and suffering are present realities. Those on all sides killed in strife, murdered without warning, assassinated without mercy or excuse, cannot be brought back. Probably those of all parties responsible for the crimes committed will escape their just deserts.

But the distress of the uprooted and displaced, the suffering of the expelled and despoiled, the misery of those deprived of their health, their homes and their means of livelihood—these are terrible present and continuing evils. There is no denial that it is the Arabs who are the victims in Palestine. It is the Arabs whose plight needs not only sympathy but immediate and active aid. The greatest service the Israelis could do for their own name would be to help repair the injury that the Zionists have caused.

It gives pleasure to state here and now that the officials of the new state are providing every possible facility for the impartial relief work of the American Friends Service Committee.

The problems of the present are urgent and vital; they should engage the interest and energy of many more altruistic individuals and humanitarian agencies. But the prospects of the future also demand attention. What can the fate of Israel be expected to be?

There are those who will look for tensions and strife involving greater nations and more extensive areas as the resources of the Near and Middle East become increasingly known and desired. The lessons of history will be studied. It will be recalled that John Garstang wrote in *The Heritage of Solomon* these fateful words: "From every point of view we find Palestine to be a land naturally disunited from within, and readily accessible from without, and we realize as a historic fact that it has not the makings of an independent country."<sup>1</sup>

It may be that the world will see an external material and physical Armageddon, or the battle to be fought on the great day of the Lord may be symbolic of the continuing struggle between good and evil in individuals and states, with the United Nations providing the means of escape from war for all peoples. This only the future will reveal.

Avoiding anything that partakes of the nature of prophecy, it is possible to discuss usefully another problem of the new religious state. It is more than an interesting fact, it is a fact important in world history, that in 1947 two new religious states were born, Israel in Palestine and Pakistan in India. Their establishment is quite plainly opposed to what has appeared to be a world trend in the relationship of religion and government.

From the time of the Middle Ages until the present century religious officials and organizations have exercised decreasing power over national governments. Not necessarily religion as such, but ecclesiastical authority has been separated from the political administration of states. Progressively the temporal power of church organizations has decreased. States have adopted secular laws and civil officials to enforce them. The process was universal but was in active movement only in Europe and Great Britain; it was officially in force in the United States and elsewhere in the Western Hemisphere.

Separation of church and state, of religion and government, was undoubtedly a world trend. It began with the Protestant Reformation and

<sup>1</sup> John Garstang, *The Heritage of Solomon, an Historical Introduction to the Sociology of Ancient Palestine*. London, published for Herbert Spencer's Trustees by Williams and Norgate, 1934.

continued into the present century. Two great political events gave great impetus to the movement for secularism: the establishment of the communist State in Russia and the official rejection of Islam as the religion of the State by the Republic of Turkey. There is a sense in which it is true that communism has become the religion of the Soviet Union, but it is even so an irreligious religion and therefore secular.

In only one nation has the union of religion and government been of recent and urgent importance in world affairs: that, of course, was in Japan. The defeat of Japan led to the renunciation of the union of religious and governmental authority in one person. But since then, in one year, two new states, both born of religious convictions, have come into being.

The most fundamental long-range matter of concern for Israel will be its attitude toward religious liberty. It is a religious state. Will it tolerate religious differences amongst its own citizens? Will it tolerate the people of other religions within its borders? Will it sanction compulsion, by police or rabbi, of religious conformity? The newly constituted *Knesset* or legislative assembly has 120 members representing a dozen religio-political parties. All but three of these are Jewish, as would seem to be natural in a Jewish State. But will only Jews live in the State? If non-Jews live there, will only Jews represent them and make laws for them? Will Reform Judaism have religious freedom and equality?

It is improbable that the United Nations will sanction the exclusive control by one religious government of a land sacred to two other religions. There will have to be some measure and means of religious freedom and toleration in Israel.

From the American standpoint, the ideal constitution would, of course, assure complete liberty of conscience for all citizens of the nation and complete freedom of religion for the followers of all faiths resident in the State, subject only to the rules for public security and order. If Article 18 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights were made a part of the Constitution of Israel, the peace and welfare of the new State would become a probability. This Article states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance." The implementation of the Article in the structure of the administration and the laws of the State would place Israel in the forefront of mankind's march to freedom.

The separation of the religious and governmental authority that



Article 18 implies can hardly be expected in Israel. There is too little background of experience for Zionists to understand or desire such freedom for religion. Only a minority of the Jews of the world know anything about the separation of government and religion. And only a minority of the Jews of Israel are from Western Europe and America. Even if they wished to do so, it would take years, perhaps even generations, for them to teach their fellow citizens the meaning and value of liberty of conscience and freedom of religion.

But it is that knowledge and that experience which raise religion to its highest expression. To be religious, that is, to worship and serve God constrained only by the soul's love and desire, is true religion. To be religious, not through any social pressure or inducement, but because of faith in God, is a personal and spiritual attitude. To be religious, not because laws direct communal loyalty and police compel conformity, but because one voluntarily chooses what is right and good for oneself and one's neighbors—that is the ideal life.

The separation of religion and government means that the government does not exercise its secular authority over the religious attitudes and activities of individuals and that religious officials and organizations do not use temporal means and measures for spiritual ends.

One who was born in Judaism nearly two millenniums ago gave new life and meaning to an older Hebrew faith when he taught that religion was to be found in the true and spiritual rebirth of the individual, not in national solidarity. He rejected the kingship over his people because his kingdom was not to be of this world, but in the hearts of all men. He rebuked his followers who would have used the compulsion of punishment by lightning because he taught that God wanted only willing service.

He was another Israelite indeed who, without guile, sincerely loved God with all his life and his neighbor more than himself.

# The Book of Common Prayer and the American Churches

NOLAN B. HARMON

## I

IN 1549 THERE CAME from a hand screw-press in London, a succession of printed sheets, pulled one by one from the inked type. These were eventually stacked, trimmed, and bound together under a title page bearing this august inscription:

The  
Book of the Common  
Prayer and Admin-  
istration of  
the  
Sacramentes and Other  
Rites and Ceremonies of  
the Church: after the  
Use of the Church  
of England

So was published the first Prayer Book.

The time was not auspicious—I write as an editor—for bringing out what might hope to be an enduring book. Indeed, in the middle of the sixteenth century nothing promised to be enduring or stable. There was a boy nine years old as king on the throne of England—a frail, precocious lad whose troubled days were already numbered. There was a dour, repressed, enigmatic woman waiting to be crowned queen as Mary; there was a high-tempered, impetuous girl waiting to be Queen Elizabeth. There were sturdy men waiting to be burned for their faith and to “light a candle that would never be put out.” There were others waiting to fly to Geneva and to be indoctrinated there by John Calvin and to come back full of ideas regarding liturgy and worship which more sobersided Englishmen were to consider “vain” and radical. The Reformation had blazed for thirty years, but England was not Reformed, neither was it Roman Catholic. The Mass was said in Latin in some churches, and in English in

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others. Thousands believed in the Real Presence, and other thousands disbelieved in it. The cup was given to the laity in some churches, denied to them in others. Yet into the midst of all this seething era, fermenting with the wine of the new learning and the vision of an expanding world, came the Prayer Book, and such was its genius and power that immediately there began to solidify about it a Church which has remained as solid and unshakable as the British people themselves. And that—as we Americans are willing to admit ever since the dreadful autumn of 1940—is, to relapse into English understatement, a bit unshakable.

Who wrote the Prayer Book? Scholars by the score have wrought over the sources, any number of which we may discover with no great trouble within the volume itself. The separate strands, twisted together to make the cable, can in many instances be unraveled and studied one by one. But these strands—or this book, to speak plainly—was not put together by a “commission” after the pattern of our modern age. No present-day ecclesiasticism called upon to formulate a compilation which would direct all its worship, would dare entrust such a task to one man, or to any but a “large representative group.” Many minds and many viewpoints would thus be represented, as they are represented in our modern formularies and compilations, and from such a group a neatly tailored book usually comes forth to be publicized mightily and to die early. Not so the Prayer Book.

Some hold that there was a regular commission and Bishops Goodrich, Ridley, and Holbeach, with four “learned men,” Doctors May, Taylor, Haines, and Cox are credited with putting in certain suggestions. But from all who have ever studied the Prayer Book, there comes a common ascription of credit to the vast liturgical genius of one man—Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Cranmer himself, like the Prayer Book, represented something of a compromise. He was essentially a thin-skinned scholar with a touch of the courtier in him, a man of erudition who loved books and decency and churchliness and liturgy. He shrank from violence and the terrific passions that were shaking the kingdom. He probably abominated the fires of Smithfield that burned the heretics who denied the Real Presence in the Mass, just as he doubtless abominated the ax that slew Sir Thomas More—though, he, Cranmer, kept very quiet on all such occasions, or it would not be hard to believe, even joined in whatever chorus happened to prevail. He was a trimmer in politics and might have echoed Erasmus’ smug saying, “All of us have not the strength for martyrdom.” Let be said, however, that he did have strength for martyrdom and thrust first into

the flames the hand that signed his recantation. His pliancy really enabled him to do his distinctive work. Had he been a Luther or a Calvin or a Knox, he would have defied Henry and his head would soon have rolled from the block. Had he been a crass worldling, he could never have sounded the depths of real devotion nor caught the genius of a great people in the Common Prayer. He was a courtier who knew how to keep his head—literally!—and a statesman who could live under Henry VIII and, even though in high position, manage to survive that erratic and tempestuous monarch.

But in liturgical expression he was matchless. To be sure, as has been said, others than Cranmer undoubtedly had a hand in the Prayer Book and advised with him. Yet to all intents and purposes the Book of Common Prayer is the work of Cranmer and will always be so regarded.

Cranmer was familiar with the service books of his own church then extant, with some reformed liturgies which had appeared and with the classic liturgies of the past. All, of course, was in Latin. He had been worshiping and conducting worship all his life and was as much at home with the recurrent offices of his church as we are with the words of a beloved hymn. When he therefore put the Prayer Book together, he was able to shape its form in accord with his own disposition and learning, and to give to the whole writing that peculiar sense of liturgical fitness which is manifest in every line of the book.

We are not, however, to think of the Prayer Book as springing full blown from the brain even of Cranmer. The moves that preceded the production of such a compilation can today be pointed out one by one with their inevitable resultant. Past events have a way of telescoping themselves together in our minds as though they were simultaneous occurrences once the centuries have flown, but when they were taking place each one marked a milestone in its own right. The production of the Great Bible in 1539 gave England the Scripture in its own language; certain reformed liturgies had appeared on the continent, as even Catholic Bishops such as Ximenes in Spain and Herrmann in Cologne realized that change was in order. Parliament itself had finally put through a measure designed to give the cup to the laity, and everything called for a common "Use" when Cranmer and his helpers set out to produce one.

Like Shakespeare's plays not long afterward, the Prayer Book undoubtedly had the benefit of a considerable oral workout before being reduced into fixed writing. "The Royal Chapel during the early months

of Edward VI's reign served as a kind of experimental station in expectance of the eventual Prayer Book."<sup>1</sup> So, a generation later, Shakespeare's plays were to be tested on the boards themselves and to be revised as need might demand under the applause or the derisive yells of the listeners. With that type of editorial help, no wonder players altered lines to fit some happier meaning, or omitted the redundant or the nondynamic. So out of vocal trial and error, failure and success, the lines and play became fixed. Then they were put on paper, edited by life, as it were. Thus with large sections of the Prayer Book. Cranmer and his confreres knew their services backward and forward in Latin. The general pattern was fairly well fixed, but to get these offices expressed in the "common tongue"—ah, there was the rub.

And, as it turned out, there was the glory. As Hilaire Belloc put it, Cranmer "provided a substitute for the noble Latin on which the soul of Europe had been formed for more than a thousand years, and gave to the church of England a treasure, by the esthetic effect of which, more than anything else, her spirit has remained alive and she has attached herself to the hearts of men."

The crux of the whole book, certainly the storm center, was of course the Mass. To get that service into English and to make it what English Protestantism conceived it to be, A Sacrament of Holy Communion, the Supper of the Lord, was the immediate grand design, and as it turned out, the crux and final resultant of all the work. The earliest liturgies extant in Christian records have to do with the Lord's Supper, and the meaning of that institution has been the conflict of the ages. The whole Reformation came to a focus just here. Was it to be a *mass* or a *memorial*, an *altar* or a *table*? Was there a sacrificial something in the service which the priest alone could effect? or was it "a perpetual memory of that, his precious death, until his coming again?" Over these scarcely formulated positions men had already begun to fight and were to continue to fight unto this day.

Could Protestants and Catholics agree on other points, there would remain the almost insoluble question of the Mass. Indeed, all conferences and conciliatory meetings, called or held by princes and temporal powers in order to bring Roman Catholic and Protestant together, have always broken on the meaning of this Sacrament. Grant the Roman Catholic his premise, that in the Mass, by word of the priest, the actual flesh and body of Christ, the Lord of heaven and earth, appear in his hands, and we

<sup>1</sup> *The Times* (London), *Literary Supplement*, March 12, 1949.

might very well admit that the man who can effect this has the keys to heaven, and that so far as we are concerned *he* is the door. Or if the Roman Catholic grants us that what Christ did once long ago was a "full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction," once and for all; that no man here or hereafter, may repeat that "oblation of himself once offered," then indeed the *hoc est meum corpus* droned by the priest is "hocus pocus," as the blunt folk-etymology of England had it, and the whole business becomes as the Prayer Book Article XXXI says it is, "blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits."

Apparently Cranmer and his co-workers were at that time simply trying to get the Mass over into English, with certain reformed ideas such as the cup to the laity, to be enshrined in the new office. But the order of events in the new English service which they produced in 1549 was exactly the order of these same events in the old Latin Mass, and the title of the service was "The Communion of The Lord's Supper commonly called The Mass." Also the priest said, "This is my body," "this is my blood," when he gave the elements. It is no wonder, therefore, that there was instantly a recoil on the part of reformed elements from the 1549 office as it was in the first Prayer Book. Not until the book was revised ten years later under Elizabeth did the whole service of communion become fairly well fixed as it now is in the Prayer Book. And it may be added for the benefit of Methodists who may read this, it then became fixed just as it is in the ritual of the present-day Methodist Church. The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, when it adopted its prayer book, went back at this point largely to the first Prayer Book; the Methodists, following John Wesley's use, reproduce the office as it has remained in the Prayer Book of the Church of England.

Following are the four principles which, the first Prayer Book states in its preface, guided in its presentation:

1. Purgation of the "untrue," "uncertain," "vain" (without meaning), and "superstitious."
2. Translation into the vernacular instead of Latin.
3. Simplification of ritual.
4. Uniformity of use.

The first Prayer Book, as has been stated, did not go nearly as far as the reformed elements felt it should, and there was instantly a reaction against some of its attitudes and provisions. In fact, even with the second revision of 1552 and with the last one of 1662, the Prayer Book has never seemed to some to embody the complete ethos of Protestantism.



Like the Church of England itself, it is a compromise, not forsaking altogether the ancient Roman tradition, never standing unequivocally at all points inside the Protestant norm. This in-between position has, of course, been the pride of English churchmen who are pleased that within their fold both High Church and Low Church elements may find refuge. Like the traditional Englishman in political affairs, face-saving and compromise seem to be embodied in the Common Prayer as in the English Church itself.

It was during the Marian reign of terror that the English refugees in Geneva and on the continent imbibed some of the advanced doctrines of the Reformation. Back in England, when Elizabeth had succeeded Mary, they were able to force a second revision of the Prayer Book. This revision was destined to last, and while it carried the book farther into the Protestant fold, it did not completely satisfy the Puritan elements who were beginning to grow in strength over Britain. It did, however, break up the old order of the Mass, so that in the English book the sequence of events in what we now call "the communion" became fixed just as they are at present. Perhaps most important of all was the change in the words of delivery in the communion office.

In the second Prayer Book, to the former words of delivery ("The Body of our Lord . . . The Blood of the Lord") were added in 1552 those which appear in the present formula, "The body of the Lord Jesus Christ, *which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life.* (*Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy hearts by faith with thanksgiving*" was added here in 1662.)

"The blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, *which was shed for thee, preserve thy soul and body unto everlasting life.*" (*Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee and be thankful*" was added in 1662.)

The Elizabethan, or second Prayer Book, rested upon a much more secure foundation than did the original Prayer Book, but the Puritan movement, growing daily in strength, continued to press for more revision. The Puritans objected to The Litany, saying that it "caused a confused noise"; they wanted one long prayer instead. They also objected to sponsors in baptism, to the wedding or ring ceremony in the marriage rite, and to the committal in burial. A conference or two, called by the King or bishops to satisfy these demands, got nowhere. Then came the Revolution. Charles I was beheaded, and Oliver Cromwell assumed control as Lord Protector of the Realm. With him the Puritan movement triumphed in Parliament as well as everywhere else, and the Prayer Book

was done away and supplanted by what was known as the "Directory for the Public Worship of God in The Three Kingdoms." This Directory embodied most of the reforms the Puritans had desired. Five pages were taken up in describing how the pastoral prayer should be formulated. The traditionally "long Presbyterian prayer" stems directly out of the old Cromwellian Directory, and indeed Presbyterian service books to this day are quite often known as *Directories*.

But on the accession of Charles II, the Prayer Book was restored, and has been in authoritative use in the United Kingdom ever since. There was, however, need for some revision in the book following the disturbances due to the wars, etc., and this came about in 1662. Certain Puritan divines were invited to the conference held for the purpose of revision, but the bishops were in the first flush of their victory and doubtless sick and tired of "canting Puritans," and of being pushed off the map by psalm-singing, unsurprised divines with their unesthetic "directory." They wanted their Prayer Book back just as it was, and they got it that way. They did yield here and there at minor points to Puritan notions, but in general kept the book pretty much as it had been. One new office, that for the Baptism of Adults, was added, as many people had grown up during the wars unbaptized, and as adult converts from the West Indies seemed to need such a service. This was the last revision of the Prayer Book.

From 1662 to the present, only minor changes have been made, and these chiefly editorial, in the Book of Common Prayer. Pressure for revision has manifested itself from time to time and Parliament has considered appeals for change. But the British people, probably with some wisdom, feel that since they do not know what party or what group might control a new revision, and since there would certainly be in the new book sentences which may or may not be as pleasing as the ones now in, and since in the present book everyone has an opportunity to read into the rubrics and prayers his own ideas, the likelihood is that change will not be made soon. The book, therefore, comes to its 400th anniversary unrevised for almost 300 years.

## II

It is worthy of note that the English Bible and English Prayer Book have mutually supported each other. Indeed, the influence of the newly translated Bible upon the first Prayer Book can scarcely be overestimated. In the preface to the Prayer Book itself there is given as one of the reasons for its compilation the desire to see that the Scripture be read con-



sistently and regularly Sunday by Sunday. That purpose has been well accomplished. Where other churches are accustomed to a haphazard reading of the Scripture, with each minister, if he reads at all, selecting the lesson that suits him, or a lesson which may later serve as a springboard for his sermon, those who worship through the Prayer Book are taken meticulously through lessons, Gospels and Epistles at a steady and regular gait. To be sure, the lessons do not always fit the occasion, and the readings sometimes sound alien to modern life. But the book is surely and consistently read, and by an alchemy of its own, it makes itself felt in the hearts of thousands of people.

Coverdale, and certainly Coverdale's Bible, provided the text of Scripture used in the first Prayer Book. The King James Version was later adopted for the most of the Prayer Book, at its final revision in 1662, and since that time has supplanted the Coverdale words *except in the Psalms*. This last mention is worthy of note, as the version of the Psalms which is, to this day, found in the Prayer Book, both in England and America, is that of Coverdale. Old Methodist rituals, as they took over from the English Prayer Book, for many years kept the Coverdale translation of the Psalms, and the Protestant Episcopal Church does so to this day. There is a picturesque quaintness about the Coverdale version which cannot but be noticed by those who use it. ". . . Thou makest his beauty to consume away, like as it were a moth (fretting a garment)."

The style of the Prayer Book has been its glory. It combines strength of language with literary skill, warmth and piety with lofty expression. "Elegant to a high degree" was John Wesley's comment upon the book. Liturgical expression itself is something more than devotional writing and something more than literary structure. A peculiar blending of both is called for, and it is this blend which stamps the Prayer Book as unique among any and all books in this special field. Indeed, all other devotional books draw from it as from a never-failing fountain and its majestic sentences have found their way into almost every liturgy which has appeared in the English language anywhere on earth.

The book at places does embody an almost literal translation of the prayers and rites of the then extant older liturgies. And why not? The best of the old often transcends anything that the new can produce. Take, for instance, the flawless Collect for Purity, which is as well known as any prayer in the book. This form came straight out of the Latin and the priest used to repeat it by himself and for himself before he celebrated the Mass. Now it belongs to all:

Deus cui omne cor patet & omnis voluntas loquitur, & quem nullum latet secretum; purifica per infusionem sancti spiritus cogitationes cordis nostri ut te perfecte diligere & digne laudare mereamur. per dominum. . . .

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

In baptism, the old Mozarabic Rite of the reforming Spanish Bishop, Ximenes, was drawn upon to give brief sentence prayers. In ordaining the clergy, especially in the form for the Ordering of Priests, Cranmer's friend, Martin Bucer, is to be given credit for the "inquisitorial questions" which the bishop puts to the candidate before he, with other priests, lays his hands upon him and ordains him to be a priest. These questions The Methodist and Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States have both kept almost exactly as the first Prayer Book had them, although the Methodist ordinand arises as an "elder," the Protestant Episcopal as a "priest." But the long-dead German reformer is the one who was responsible for the solemn charge and searching questions.

Thus, out of many sources, the book came into being. The general pattern of its presentation, with readings, lessons, and the like, followed something like the norm already established for the regular church year. Missals, breviaries, and older service books played a prime part here. But the language and the total effect was new, and 1549 ended for Britain the medieval church and began the modern one with Protestantism as its heart and soul.

One feature of the Prayer Book which has sometimes been noted is its rather frequent use of duplicates. For instance, in the invitation at Holy Communion, "Ye that do *truly* and *earnestly* . . . and are in *love* and *charity* . . . draw near with *faith*, and take this Holy sacrament to your *comfort* . . ."

And in the general confession, "We *acknowledge* and *bewail* our manifold *sins* and *wickedness* which we from *time to time* . . . provoking most justly thy *wrath* and *indignation* . . . we do *earnestly repent* and are *heartily sorry* . . . that we may ever hereafter *serve* and *please* thee . . . to the *honor* and *glory* of thy name."

Or in the wedding prayer, "Eternal God, *Creator* and *Preserver* of all mankind, *giver* of all spiritual grace, the *author* of everlasting life, . . . *This man* and *this woman* . . . that these persons may surely *perform*

and *keep the vow and covenant . . . and may ever remain in perfect love and peace together. . . .*"

Such duplications abound throughout the Prayer Book. They have a rhythmic value as well as the ability to inculcate the idea which both expressions support, and the entire blend is one of strength and accuracy, as well as of high devotional congruence.

The influence of the Prayer Book upon other Christian denominations, as these have arisen or increased, has been enormous, especially in the English-speaking countries. It has, as has been suggested, always been used as a reservoir of prayers, and even in the nonliturgical churches the various bulletins, manuals of devotion, and private offices have been enriched because of the stately collects and prayers of its pages. In many instances "adaptation," that is, alteration of its forms or prayers, has taken place, and while the material is in the "public domain" as far as copyright is concerned, there ought to be a moral restraint to forbid the bending or twisting of august formularies of the past so as to make these say something their authors did not mean them to say.

The Protestant Episcopal Church in America as the titular, and shall we say, legitimate, daughter of the Church of England adopted the Prayer Book at its organization (1789) with some modifications. These modifications were not unimportant, and are to be studied carefully by all interested. However, the book is, in the main, the American edition of the English Book of Common Prayer. Dr. John W. Suter and Canon George J. Cleaveland of the Washington Cathedral have just produced an authoritative and interesting study entitled *The American Book of Common Prayer*,<sup>2</sup> and they make plain in their pages the continuation of the English Use in the present American book.

As was mentioned before, the order for the administration of the Lord's Supper in the American Prayer Book has been "enriched"—to quote Suter and Cleaveland—by the insertion of the Prayer of Consecration taken from the Scotch Liturgy rather than from the 1662 English book. There were several other changes made when the 1789 book was first published for the Protestant Episcopal Church, but this alteration of the Communion office is the one most commented upon.

Subsequently the American book has been revised twice: once in 1892, when a long struggle for liturgical revision succeeded, and when new offertory sentences and a prayer for the President of the United States were added; again in 1928, when new flexibility and new material

<sup>2</sup> Oxford University Press, 1949.

also came in. The scope of the Prayer for the Whole State of Christ's Church Militant was then expanded to include the blessed dead; the rubric against using the burial service for suicides was removed; the word "obey" was taken from the woman's betrothal in matrimony, a prayer for the blessing of the ring in matrimony added, and other minor revisions made here and there. The General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church has the power to effect revision of the Prayer Book under well-prescribed rules, but has never done this until a responsible commission has had a chance to study and recommend changes where these seem needful. Ritualistic and liturgical revision always proceeds slowly, however, and almost always there is a powerful minority against any "innovation." At present there is no agitation of any weight for a further revision of the Protestant Episcopal Use.

### III

The Methodists have had a very interesting connection with the English Prayer Book—one which Methodists themselves are often amazed to discover. While a nonliturgical church and "free" in its general worship, Methodism has always had fixed forms to guide it in its recurrent offices, and these offices came directly to American Methodism from the Prayer Book. John Wesley himself was responsible here, for he sent to American Methodism at its origin in 1784 an abridgment of the Book of Common Prayer. This he called "The Sunday Service for the Methodists in North America." That he thought of this book as in reality an edition of the Book of Common Prayer is made clear by Mr. Wesley's preface to the Sunday Service. He wrote:

I believe there is no liturgy in the world, either in ancient or modern language, which breathes more of solid, Scriptural, rational piety than the Common Prayer of the Church of England; and though the main of it was compiled considerably more than two hundred years ago, yet is the language of it not only pure but strong and elegant in the highest degree.

Little alteration is made in the following edition of it, except in the following instances:

1. Most of the Holy Days (so called) are omitted, as at present answering no valuable end.
2. The service of the Lord's Day, the length of which has often been complained of, has been considerably shortened.
3. Some sentences in the offices of Baptism and for the burial of the dead are omitted; and
4. Many Psalms left out and many parts of others as being highly improper for the mouths of a Christian congregation.

Bristol, September 9, 1784

John Wesley

It is surprising that no Methodist scholar has as yet looked to see what psalms Mr. Wesley left out, and what "parts of others" he thought were "highly improper" for Christian repetition. The Wesley omissions in the Sunday Service often speak louder than what was left in.

Wesley did not change the communion service at all—or only in negligible omissions—and to this day The Methodist Church has kept the Communion office almost as Wesley sent it over. The Baptismal office did not fare so well with American Methodists, and they went to work on it from the first moment they got hold of it in 1784. They said that it "squinted at baptismal regeneration" and they didn't like it. Especially did they try to suppress Wesley's sending over a rubric calling for the making of the sign of the cross on the forehead of the newly baptized. Some old Methodist Sunday Service books have the "signation," some haven't. The variation here was a puzzle to all who have studied in this field until last summer when Dr. James R. Joy found one copy of the Sunday Service in the library of the New York Methodist Historical Society which had *six* duplicate pages bound in it—duplicate, that is, except that the signation was omitted from what was evidently one newly printed page, and the "manual acts" in the Communion were omitted from the page that carried the Prayer of Consecration. Somebody evidently gave orders to take out the pages with the signation and manual acts, and to print and insert others. As the Sunday Service came over in loose sheets to avoid the payment of heavy duty on bound books, it was easy enough to insert American-revised pages. If some printer hadn't made that mistake in the New York book, Methodists could have gone on arguing forever as to whether or not John Wesley really allowed the signation. Certainly the American Methodists didn't. In fact they revised and surrevised their Baptismal office, took out and put in, until today the Methodist office bears little resemblance to the original, and is nothing that Methodists themselves are greatly pleased about.

In other offices Wesley also made changes. He took out sponsors in Baptism, the committal in burial, the wedding or ring ceremony in marriage. In fact, as has been said, Wesley gave Methodism a *marriage* without a *wedding*. His followers on this side, however, put back what he omitted, and sponsors, committal, and ring ceremony all went back into Methodist offices at their respective places late in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, in putting these forms back, American Methodists copied the Protestant Episcopal book in the United States, not the English book of Mr. Wesley.



Other Wesleyan changes may also be noticed for a moment. The word "priest" was changed by Wesley to "elder" whenever he met it, in the book he sent to America. So, to this day, Methodist ministers of the higher rank are always termed "elders." Also Wesley changed the word "bishop" to "superintendent" and left out the entire office of Confirmation. No one has been able quite to explain Mr. Wesley's reasons for making these particular changes, though they have been greatly discussed by various schools of thought among the followers of Wesley.

Wesley evidently thought that his edition of the Prayer Book would be the Ark of the Covenant for American Methodism, just as the parent book had been for the Church of England. But he reckoned without his host—also without the tremendous activism and exuberant freedom of the pioneer Americans. For these, in short order, discarded the Sunday Service after only two editions, feeling, as Jesse Lee, one of their stalwarts, said, that they could "pray better with their eyes shut than with their eyes open." Then American Methodism went ahead to create its own book, characteristically one of ordered life and activity, not of ordered worship, aptly termed the *Discipline* or the *Book of Discipline*. But in every Discipline from 1792 (when the Sunday Service was discarded and the Discipline incorporated its material) there have always been printed eight of the ancient offices of the Prayer Book. These—Communion, the two Baptismal services, Matrimony, Burial of the Dead, and the three forms for the ordination of Deacons, Elders, and Bishops—constitute the Methodist Ritual. Certain later forms have been added to the eight original ones to take care of such matters as the reception of members, laying a cornerstone, dedicating a church, etc. These ancient offices have been abridged by the Methodists several times, and not always to advantage. The Communion office has been least touched, the Baptismal the most. Up to the present moment, however, Methodism conducts her stated services, observes the sacraments, marries her young people, buries her dead and ordains her ministers in the language of Thomas Cranmer. Certain older truculent Methodist ministers used to object to having it said that the Methodists "used the Episcopal Service" in marriage or burial, pointing out the fact that the Methodist Church was using these offices five years before the Protestant Episcopal Church was organized in this country. But who cares, provided that all things are done for edification?

In other Christian denominations, especially in the recurrent stated

services, such as marriage and burial, the dominance of the Prayer Book has been marked. The invariable and stately way in which these offices are publicly conducted, and their constant recurrence through the centuries, has inevitably produced a pattern of thought which other denominations perforce must follow, or perforce must stay away from. The Sacramental services, as would be expected, do not follow so closely the Prayer Book pattern, nor are they overinfluenced by it, since doctrinal and therefore liturgical differences here are deep. But whenever a church has revised its "ritual" or its "directory," or where new forms are to be added, as those for the laying of a cornerstone, the dedication of a house of worship, or the like, one can always see that the Prayer Book has been referred to if not directly copied. This is especially true in the solemnization of matrimony, since the office in the Prayer Book follows a definite and dramatic pattern, with each part adding to a perfectly tuned whole, and the several ceremonies in the rite congruently flowing both logically and liturgically toward the satisfyingly complete office. Later nonliturgical or individualistic marriage formularies have either consciously followed the Prayer Book or consciously avoided following it. In either instance the book has influenced action.

Burial offices have also, to an extent, been influenced by the Prayer Book, but not to the degree that the marriage rite has been. The big fraternal orders might be mentioned at this point, as they have developed their respective rituals for burying their dead. However, although these follow the traditional ceremonies and some of the readings of the ancient English use, they lack its solemn but vast and assured hope, and have been so denatured of any positive religious affirmation—in order to fit everyone—that they might as well be clods falling on the coffin. Nothing cold and hopeless can be very esthetic.

So 400 years have gone by, and over the whole world, while the anniversary itself may not be greatly noticed, the Book of Common Prayer certainly is. When Sunday comes, worshipers find their places in churches in Birmingham, Manchester, Plymouth, Capetown, Calcutta, Ottawa, Victoria, Hong Kong, Sydney—not to speak of those in the far-flung empire of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States. All these open usually to the same lesson, the same epistle, and the same collect. Perhaps it is upon the rolling deck of some ship where a grizzled old sea captain "reads the service." Perhaps it is a British chaplain at Gibraltar or Jamaica, perhaps it is the dean of St. Paul's, or some humble vicar on the English

Downs or in the Cotswolds—but these all read from the selfsame book. In America, likewise, millions. And if the service be one of Holy Communion and the Methodists join in, also millions more will “acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness which we, from time to time, most grievously have committed by thought, word, and deed” against the Divine majesty.

The Church of England may not be “the British Empire at prayer,” as was once facetiously said, but the Book of Common Prayer summons to their knees people far beyond even that empire’s wide dominions.

O Lord, let thy mercy be showed upon us—  
*As we do put our trust in thee.*

# The Changing Fortunes of Urban Protestantism

FREDERICK A. SHIPPEY

PROTESTANTISM IS CONFRONTED by a vast new opportunity in the city. The proportions of it have but lately dawned upon the consciousness of religious leaders. With the completion of several hundred research projects covering various phases of Protestant church work, it is now possible to discover the delineation of trend patterns. Eight findings at least are worth the attention of religious leaders. They indicate a little success in the midst of extensive failure. A fresh examination of the status of Protestantism in the light of the research studies can issue in a broadening of denominational awareness. Increasing support may be won for the methods that will help Protestantism to respond effectively to its total opportunity. The future belongs to those who prepare for it.

## I. UNPRECEDENTED URBAN OPPORTUNITY

Never in the history of America has the Protestant opportunity in cities been so extensive and so propitious. Note the large-scale and continuing in-migration of people to urban places. This has resulted in extensive urban growth. Cities, especially in portions of the South, Southwest, and Far West have doubled and tripled in population. New suburban developments have mushroomed into existence almost overnight. Unfortunately, Protestantism has not kept pace with the growth of the city. Almost everywhere one may note the lag. As a result many areas of the city and contiguous suburbs are underchurched. Millions of new residents are still untouched by the ministry of any church. The people will not return to the farms and villages. For better or for worse, they are in the city to stay.

Twice since 1940 a new all-time record for births has been established in the United States. More babies were born in 1943 (2,934,860 births) than in any previous year in the history of the nation. Three years later this record was eclipsed. For the first time in United States

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history, the number of births reached and exceeded the three-million mark. From 1940 to 1947 there occurred a 31-per-cent gain in the number of children under five years per thousand women fifteen to forty-nine years of age. The increase for urban areas was 47 per cent, or approximately four times that registered for rural farm areas.

Births are recorded according to the place of residence of the parents. No matter where the actual delivery takes place, the child's birth is reported in the community where the parents maintain legal residence. More babies are born in the city of Chicago than in the entire state of Iowa. More than one half of the births for the state of New York are to parents who reside within the corporate limits of the city of New York. More births are reported in the city of Los Angeles than in the entire state of Wisconsin, more in Philadelphia than in Kansas, more in Detroit than in Nebraska, more in Boston than in Nevada and Wyoming combined, and so on. More babies are born in the fifteen largest United States cities than the total number reported for the eleven states of Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin. Today more children are born in the city and grow up under urban conditions than at any time in the history of the United States. A vast number of children and young parents reside in American cities.

The remarkable increase in births since the beginning of the current decade has resulted in an unprecedented number of elementary school children. And the number is increasing. A peak is not expected to be reached until after 1950. Everywhere one goes in urban America, elementary schools are found to be overcrowded. In a community recently studied, the parents of 1,000 children in the fourth grade alone begged the Protestant church to expand the Sunday school so that these children might be included. Two thirds of the parents had not yet affiliated with a local church in that city. In another community, more than 8,000 children and youth residing in Protestant homes are unrelated to the current Sunday-school program. Yet seven of the leading denominations are reporting a serious decline in enrollment. The Protestant church is relatively unaware of its vast new opportunity.

There is an increasing number of unchurched adult residents in our cities. The findings of a recent survey indicate that approximately three million persons in New York City are without vital relationship to formal religion of any type. In some cities, one person out of seven is an unchurched Protestant prospect. In new residential suburban developments,

the ratio runs as high as three persons out of four. Extensive religious census studies reveal that the number of unchurched residents in United States cities ranges from 20 to 50 per cent of the gross population. An accumulation of unreached adults and children may be found in every city. Millions of such persons reside within walking distance of a Protestant church. Never in the history of America has Protestantism been presented with so extensive and so propitious an opportunity for growth.

## II. AN EMERGING PROTESTANT CONCERN

There is a growing concern among major and minor denominations respecting the work of Protestantism in the city. This is revealed in part by the number of research specialists added recently to national boards of missions and to state and city councils of churches, and in part by the number of research projects undertaken in urban places across America.

Comparatively recently a resurgence of demand for religious research has occurred. Earlier in the century, especially during the period 1910 to 1930, a vigorous concern respecting the values of scientific inquiry in the religious field was manifested, and later waned. Perhaps the revival of interest can be traced in part to the increasing popularity of market analyses, opinion surveys, educational studies, and city planning. It was natural that scientific attention would again swing back to religious institutions.

During the past ten years, more than a score of research positions have opened up at national denominational headquarters and in local councils of churches. Employing agencies now seek scientific analyses of troubled urban areas. Objective information is procured to guide the judgment of executives in practical churching situations. Most of the researchers work full time for a particular denomination and are loaned out to conduct interdenominational assignments a month or so each year.

The number of Protestant research studies that have been completed to date is surprisingly large. Not less than several hundred may be listed. New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Atlanta, Indianapolis, St Paul, Lincoln, Seattle, Memphis, San Diego, Detroit, Richmond, St. Louis, Phoenix, Little Rock, Mobile, Tulsa, Portland, Boston, and many other urban places have received research attention by one or more denominations. Hardly a city above 100,000 population is omitted from the list. Many smaller communities have been studied also. Probably not less than 10,000 urban churches have been examined more or less scientifically by researchers during the past decade. Carefully prepared reports have been produced



to circulate and to preserve the findings. A number of the monographs are filed in university libraries. Denominational executives have bulging files of vital research data at hand for ready reference.

Why this sudden concern over Protestantism in urban places? Has some new development emerged to alter fundamentally the work of local churches? Have the fortunes of Protestantism changed? These and kindred questions may have arisen in the mind of the reader. To find an answer to the mounting concern of denominational executives is not easy. Perhaps no one can furnish a comprehensive or satisfying reply. It may be instructive, however, to abstract from the accumulating mass of research data a few tentative generalizations. An overview of the present status of urban Protestantism may direct attention to critical conditions and focus concern upon the development of new procedures related to effective work in the churches.

### III. ALARMING URBAN RELIGIOUS TRENDS

Trends within urban Protestantism are differential. *Church membership* appears generally static or modestly increasing. In older cities, especially in New England and along the Atlantic seaboard, Protestantism is having a hard time to avoid membership loss. In the Midwest and the central states, some growth is generally reported. On the west coast and in the Southwest, conspicuous growth is the typical pattern. Scattered communities across the United States vary from the general situation. Although growth is still the direction of trend, a significant deceleration of membership increase has been observed. This slowing down reveals that Protestantism is off the pace of gain reported in the general population trends. Since the turn of the century, the faith has steadily fallen behind its opportunity. Cities stimulated to spectacular population growth during the war years recorded Protestant membership increases at the prewar leisurely rate. This lag remains as one of the unsatisfactory phenomena of the contemporary situation. An inspection of the trends of fourteen denominations, including the leading religious bodies, leaves one rather disappointed respecting Protestantism's ability to keep abreast with its opportunity for growth.

The *size of urban churches* according to gross membership furnishes an important clue to the trends within Protestantism. Persistent feebleness is common to urban Protestantism. Most research specialists agree that an urban church can be too small to be effective. They affirm that in the practical situation rarely does a local church of less than 500 active

members make a significant religious impact upon its neighborhood environment. Small churches are marginal churches, i.e., the quality, range, and duration of ministry is always problematical. In some cities, 50 to 75 per cent of the units are below the level of effective strength necessary for city church work. Recent studies of this factor among several denominations indicate that the disproportionate ratio of small units has remained relatively constant during the past fifty years. The matter of persistent smallness has plagued Protestantism for decades. Recent accelerated growth of urban places has only accentuated the significance of this unsolved problem. Among some denominations a trend toward feebleness is clearly indicated by the facts. This is not a comforting consideration.

A Protestant catastrophe in embryo is revealed by the *Sunday-school enrollment losses*. In an inventory of the situation in eleven cities, one major denomination reported an average loss of 1,000 pupils per year during the past eighteen years. Many denominations have closed Sunday schools. Others have disclosed enrollment losses since 1930 running as high as 71 per cent. An examination of the trend status of Protestantism in a number of Midwestern communities reveals that enrollment losses ranging from 10 to 20 per cent have been sustained in each city. In many urban places, only one or two minor denominations report growth at all. The downward enrollment trend appears to be definitely established. It is no temporary fluctuation due to some transient factor. The forward momentum of the Sunday school has apparently been dissipated.

This enrollment decline presents a serious complication respecting the future of Protestantism. Spot studies reveal that some denominations have been recruiting from 50 to 100 per cent of their "*new*" Christians from this source. Many thousands of children and youth find their way into the life of the church via the religious-education program. Thus the shrinkage of the Sunday-school enrollment means a disastrous reduction of the most fruitful source of church growth. Such a development constitutes a potential Protestant catastrophe.

A persistent scandal of Protestantism is the extent of *systematic financial support*. Less than one active member out of two in a typical urban community contributes in any known way to the financial support of the local church with which he is affiliated. Among denominations this ratio falls as low as one out of three members. The tither is a vanishing American as far as Protestantism is concerned. Approximately 1 per cent of all givers may be so classified.

Urban Protestantism has discovered that no positive correlation exists

between effective income and the amount contributed to the support of the local church. A typist contributes five dollars per Sunday while the business or professional man in an adjacent pew places a fifty-cent piece on the offering plate. Thousands of members contribute on a "token" basis, and have been doing so for years. It would be impossible to purchase a haircut in many urban communities with the average weekly amount per capita given by church members. In some cities, the amount is as low as 22 cents. It ranges as high as 70 cents. Although the purchasing value of a dollar has greatly changed negatively during the present decade, increases in local church support have not been commensurate with the monetary depreciation. The level and extent of financial support by church members is a scandal in Protestantism.

Protestantism is drifting toward primary *specialization with middle- and upper-class* population groups. Recent studies reveal that denominations which historically began with religious work among low-income and socially disinherited people have ascended the economic and social scale. Though an exhaustive study is currently incomplete, sufficient preliminary investigation has been done to support generally the conclusion described above.

For instance, data gathered respecting occupations of church members (fourteen denominations) in a Midwestern city reveal that the recruitment of the current membership is dominantly from upper-income and upper-educational groups. Persons engaged in the manual occupations are relatively few. Operatives and laborers are three times more numerous outside of the Protestant church than within it. Comparable data assembled on the work of an evangelical denomination in forty United States cities of varying size point also toward the generalization given above. Examination of the number of Protestant employed church members per thousand gainfully employed general population reveals the sharply descending ratio of 102 members (professional) to ten members (laborers). While the exact ratio varies from city to city, the essential pattern is repeated over and over. Undoubtedly, without consciously striving to do so, Protestantism has drifted into a specialization with the middle and upper classes.

Preliminary investigation of the occupations of *church officers* of several denominations reveals that leadership positions in the local church are dominantly pre-empted by the better educated and more economically successful members. Nominating committees tend to select persons of "high visibility," i.e., individuals who possess attractive personalities and

who are economically successful. Such a biased selective process is probably unconscious. The intellectualizing of the pulpit and the formalizing of worship services may be partly the result of Protestantism's accommodation to its recent specialization with upper-status groups. These developments influence the judgment of committees. Other religious bodies are following the pattern of material success utilized by the "old line" denominations. Some sect groups are already building churches with divided chancels and are stressing an educated clergy. Perhaps the distance between the so-called "store front" and the ecclesiastical edifice with a divided chancel is less religious than it is economic and sociological. In any case, persons engaged in the manual occupations find it increasingly difficult to feel at ease in a Protestant church. Research findings indicate clearly the drift toward middle- and upper-class specialization. This may not be the intended objective of the faith.

Protestantism in the city grew up much like Topsy. Denomination after denomination, sect after sect, established preaching places and Sunday schools. Churches were built almost everywhere. Religious rivalry appeared to be a guiding objective. Some denominations, across the years, have subsidized competing units too weak to stand alone. This practice not only promoted competition and encouraged the survival of small units but also pauperized many of the congregations. Lack of orderly development and *over-all planning* is characteristic of the Protestant urban situation. The phenomenon is common within denominations also. Among other factors, lack of an adequate sociological knowledge of parish work has handicapped the faith. This underlies repeated mistakes in church placement.

Within a relatively small neighborhood of a city known to the writer, there are thirty-four Protestant churches. Not one of them is above one hundred and twenty-five persons in member strength. A number of the leading denominations have several units each in the territory. Severe competition is the normal pattern of interchurch relationship. Wars of attrition are being fought. Material resources and good will are being used up in a prodigal fashion. Eventually many of the local churches will die. Several may withdraw belatedly to find a more promising ministry in an adjacent neighborhood. Some will persist by outlasting the Protestant opposition. None will find ecumenicity across the street.

Unfortunately, this illustration does not describe an isolated phenomenon. Word from the researchers indicates that hardly a city above 50,000 population is free from religious competition. Interdenominational

rivalry is still so common that it is generally condoned. Yet overlapping parish work and duplication of ministries within denominations is also a frequent complaint of administrators and pastors. In a city recently studied, one half of the major denominations reported units competing within the religious body. The study of a leading denomination's work in a hundred cities revealed intradenominational competition in three fourths of the communities. The condition is more extensive than is generally acknowledged.

Thus, one of the conspicuous needs of Protestantism is for *over-all planning*. A practical way must be found to provide for an orderly expansion of denominational work. New extension projects should be placed in noncompetitive situations. The use of various methods (withdrawal, merger, federation, exchange of field, et al) for ameliorating the situation in overchurched neighborhoods is worth consideration. An approach to over-all planning through comity agreements is gaining in acceptance among Protestants. Within denominations, serious attempts are being made to put the work of the religious body into a master community plan. This development is part of the emerging awareness of a need for urban planning in the religious field. However, to date much of it has hardly advanced beyond the blueprint stage.

#### IV. A STRATEGY FOR PROTESTANT RECOVERY

The total impact of the alarming Protestant trends is a sobering one. Research studies have shown that all is not well with the city church. This is patent. Surrounded by an opportunity for extension which staggers the imagination, Protestantism remains halting, unco-ordinated and weak. A vast reservoir of unchurched urban residents await, almost vainly, the ministries of religion. This condition does not need to continue.

Fortunately there is not a thing wrong with Protestantism that cannot be corrected by proper remedial measures. The utilization of such measures depends principally upon the level of awareness possessed by religious leaders. The hope that a single cure-all measure can be found is naïve. Success lies in the utilization of a battery of sound methods. To stimulate thinking along these lines, the following set of remedial measures is presented. It is germane to the present discussion.

1. *Utilization of Research Services.* Several denominations provide research service free or at a nominal charge. A local community may procure the service by sending a request to national headquarters. In addition, a dozen or more councils of churches scattered across the United States



have staff members whose scientific guidance may be utilized on an inter-denominational or denominational basis. Various neighborhoods within a city need not wait longer to receive research attention. A project set up under the guidance of a person trained in the field of urban sociology and religious research can assure co-workers that all essential factors pertaining to the investigation of a proposed merger, relocation, federation, extension project or change of local church program will be examined. The problem itself determines what data should be assembled. Local religious leaders learn research processes by participating in them. This is shown by extensive field experience. Intelligent action derives from scientific analysis. Fewer churching mistakes will be made if available research services are utilized.

2. *Extension of Comity Agreements.* In many urban places the number of denominations participating in comity can be greatly increased. This has more than a public relations significance. The stressing of independence and apartness in the modern American city, among Protestants, is ludicrous. An introduction of fair play, reciprocity, and orderly development among denominations is congruous with the mind of Christ. Eventually every religious body must discover that its own work needs the security and planning which characterizes the comity pattern of Protestant co-operation at its best. One denomination cannot hope to prosper out of another's disaster. The faith is no stronger than its weakest denomination.

3. *Promotion of Denominational Teamwork.* In some cities, several churches within a denomination fail to co-operate with each other. This occurs whenever a congregation becomes self-centered and preoccupied with its own fortunes and future. Downtown and "voice" churches tend most often to drift into this "lone wolf" pattern. Occasionally a neighborhood church descends to this level of action. Eventually the practice breeds chaos. Since many of the denominations seek to serve the entire urban community, units must be spaced sufficiently remote from each other to avoid needless competition. Churches situated in closer proximity than a mile and three fourths are inevitably competitive. Physical contiguity means debilitating rivalry. Teamwork within a denomination involves, among other considerations, the proper spacing of churches, the eventual elimination of competitive situations, the correction of misplaced churches, and the joint support of extension work in the suburbs. No individual church should block the formulation and practical realization of an over-all plan of denominational work in a community. A dynamic pattern of teamwork is essential to denominational health and effectiveness in the city.



4. *Cultivation of Local Church Effectiveness.* New patterns of local church work are emerging. Fundamental changes in religious education, in pastoral counseling, in parish organization, and even in architecture become harbingers of the basic alterations that are to come. A dominantly functional emphasis is evident. Ministers are now being trained expressly for the urban pastorate. Research has indicated that pastoral experience fails to teach ministers the fundamental character of city life and its problems. Theological schools are concentrating upon in-service training. New techniques of churchmanship take into account such factors as population trends, composition, mobility, economic status, accessibility and kindred traits. Religious leaders are learning to reach apartment residents, unmarried adults, transients, elderly people, underprivileged children and youth, as well as persons of diverse economic and cultural background. This is, of course, in addition to the normal ministries of a Protestant local church. The purpose of a thorough reconsideration of the task of the local church is to mark the way to a higher level of effectiveness. The typical urban church has a lopsided ministry. It fails to provide, with uniform effectiveness, for the religious needs of all age and sex groups in the congregation.

Never in the history of America has urban Protestantism been presented with so large an opportunity for growth. The faith itself is on trial. This is Protestantism's anxious hour. Can the denominations adjust their differences, co-ordinate their efforts, and recover their lost momentum in time to claim the future? May there be an affirmative answer.

# The American Presidency: An Ethical Evaluation

BENSON Y. LANDIS

THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY is the grandest institution in the world, Charles Evans Hughes is reported to have observed after seeing Woodrow Wilson in action one day during World War I.

In the days when William McKinley was President, it is said there were only two telephones in the White House, and the number of personal assistants was small. The growth of the institution during the past fifty years has been frequently remarked.

Recently former President Hoover headed a commission authorized by Congress for the purpose of recommending a reorganization of the executive branch of the government. The members of that commission were a group of relatively conservative people from both the major parties. When they came to report they recommended, among many things, that the President be granted greater power than he now possesses for the purpose of reorganizing the myriad forms of the executive branch.

In a day when there is much public outcry concerning the power of the President, these conservative men wanted him to have one more power. These men, incidentally, take the continuation of this vast and complex machinery for granted. It is also significant that they do not place their reliance upon Congress for the execution of the details of that efficiency in government they want. It is even stated that among the best-informed students of public administration there is opinion to the effect that Congress—not the President—has been largely responsible for the sprawling mass of agencies that cover the scene. The Hoover Commission asked that the President be authorized to reorganize the government and that his specific plans should go into effect unless both houses of Congress by majority vote should designate otherwise.

In practical terms, a President must be, or must try to be, many men. The President must entertain visiting officials from other governments, select administrators for many agencies, talk to the press, make speeches,

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travel at the request of various forces, settle jurisdictional disputes among government bureaus, look over the text of speeches about to be delivered by members of the Cabinet, talk with delegations of visiting churchmen, or confer with officials of churches on specific issues.

The tasks of the presidency killed Woodrow Wilson, Warren Harding, and Franklin Roosevelt, an experienced Washington newspaperman writes. President Truman is reported to have remarked it seems that fifty decisions must be made on an ordinary day in the White House. Many must be made quickly. A President will make mistakes on an ordinary day, Mr. Truman is also said to have concluded. The situation in the White House is certainly more difficult than that faced by the "good" executive who has been described as a man who makes rapid decisions and guesses satisfactorily about 51 per cent of the time.

The nature of the President's administrative duty, narrowly defined, may be indicated by a reference to the *U. S. Government Manual 1948*, the latest edition available. It runs to 722 pages, containing brief descriptions of the functions and activities of the agencies and the names of many of the administrators. The last edition is no more cumbersome than its predecessors. The situation may be further illustrated by a reference to one department of Cabinet rank. The secretary of that department remarked about ten years ago to this writer that he could not possibly know the department—it was too large. This secretary said he could only obtain contact with the department through about fifteen bureau chiefs. Some of these bureau chiefs were quite willing that he should go through them to their underlings. Others were rather "close administrators," and were not willing. Thus, the secretary often found it hard to become acquainted with the exact nature of the bureau's business. The bureau chiefs also had more permanent status than the secretary. Many of them are still there, and the particular secretary commenting is no longer a member of the Cabinet. The secretary thus soon found out that he could, in the time at hand, deal only with policy questions and major appointments to important posts, in addition to making a number of speeches which another usually wrote for him.

If this is a reasonably satisfactory interpretation of the administrative situation faced by the head of a department of Cabinet rank, how much more intensified must be the dilemmas and quandaries of the man who must administer many agencies? Modern government agencies sorely need good administrators. For many years, probably only a small proportion of those who run government agencies could be called either seasoned or

skillful administrators. These are hard to find, to enlist, to train, to retain. One reason it is difficult to retain them is because the business world has a way of offering good men higher salaries than the federal government pays. Recently, too, international agencies have paid relatively higher salaries, because tax-free. Thus the President often has a difficult time trying to find an undersecretary of Department ABC. He frequently has to give time listening to this pressure group or that when an appointment is under consideration. For the master lobbyists do not confine their attention to legislators. They also bring their pressures to bear on departmental executives and on the President before he appoints his aides.

The President, a civilian, is, under the Constitution, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the nation. This, in itself, is a highly technical business. Every general is an executive over large numbers of other executives, it has been observed. The President is the boss, theoretically, of the armed services, but how much time can he give to this among the other pressing problems? It is common talk in Washington that a clique of admirals has always run the Navy, and that the clique has had little respect for any civilian, whether Secretary of the Navy, or President of the United States. Undoubtedly, the Presidents of the United States have varied greatly in the degree of control they were able to exercise over the armed services. A current headache is the so-called unification of the armed services, along with a continuation of some of the traditional rivalry among the services.

There are said to be at least a dozen top questions of policy and strategy that are unsettled. The question whether the Navy should construct a super aircraft carrier was only one of these. Another concerns the Panama Canal: shall the present canal be reconstructed in order to make it one of the sea-level type instead of the lock type, or shall another canal be dug? As in public affairs generally, these questions of policy and strategy are complex and interrelated. When the Panama Canal was originally planned, some engineers recommended a sea-level type, others a lock type. Theodore Roosevelt, a layman who was President of the United States, made the decision in favor of the lock canal.

Every President must be a politician, and woe unto him if he neglects this aspect of his life and work. The President is the head of the state, the chief ruler of all the people, charged with impartial government. But in the same breath he is also the head of a party. He may be under obligation to seek re-election, or, if not, his views in party councils receive

respectful attention above other opinions. Here is a dualism often overlooked, especially by church people, some of whom seem critical of the President's interest in politics. But when the party system emerged in the United States, in ways that the founding fathers did not foresee, then there landed upon the President the duty of being a politician. This is a function imposed by the experience of American political life. Hence the texts of the President's speeches are usually—if not always—looked over by political leaders before they are delivered. Political leaders may want at least to suggest an emphasis or to recommend silence on an issue at a particular time.

The President's press conference is a unique institution within an institution. It is said that no other head of state meets working reporters in the same way as the American President does. The press conferences are attended by hard-bitten men who are not only looking for news—they serve their employers who try to create news. The reporters may also enter the pressroom trying to embarrass the President. Verbal duels may take place. The press conference offers certain opportunities to the President. He may "plant questions" in the press conference. One way is to suggest to a caller at his office that it would not be inappropriate for a reporter to ask him a certain question at the next press conference. After the question is asked, the President is prepared with a reply, and considerable publicity results. The President is not quoted directly at press conferences, except in unusual circumstances. As the years have passed, and the complexity and interrelatedness of explosive issues are recognized, it seems that presidential aides make careful preparation for the press conference. Quick remarks on obscure issues can hinder public understanding.

When the President is in Washington, and in good health, there is usually a daily calling list. It is omitted when an important speech must be written or momentous issues must be handled by confidential assistants. The daily calling list is an interesting phenomenon. All sorts and conditions of people try to see the President. As one reads the list day by day, one wonders why the missions of many were considered important enough to take the time of the head of state. If one wishes to see the President, one must state the reason why. If one sees him, one is not supposed to quote him directly—the rule is much the same as that for the reporters. But one is usually free to mention to reporters, who are always on duty at the White House offices, the subject under consideration. Some callers go farther and give to reporters indirectly what they think the President said. Callers are apt to do this, if they think the

President gave encouragement to their cause. But the President is then also free, at the first opportunity, to convey to the press another version of the conversation.

Many men and women see the President who could have spent their time more profitably if they had talked with the assistant secretary of Department DEF. This writer has met distinguished citizens in Washington who possessed sufficient perspective to say, after an interview with the President, that they had been unfair to him by taking his time. Frequently all the President can do with a matter brought to him is to refer it to a department. But a reference to a department from the President carries with it a prestige or priority that may not be attached if the distinguished citizen takes up the matter only with the department. The citizen cannot know whether the department will take his cause to the President. From this, one learns the importance of the daily calling list.

In this connection, the President must decide (or permit his aides to exercise judgment) how often to see officials of the Southern Baptist Convention, or the Church of Christ, Scientist, or the Federal Council of Churches, or the National Catholic Welfare Conference. Then there are the dissident Protestants who appear to dislike the churches of the Federal Council as much as they dislike the Vatican. It is a tradition that a President of the United States lends official encouragement to organized religion. In a practical, workaday world it must be decided how to distribute the speaking engagements among religious groups, what kinds of greetings are to be mailed, and to which church conferences, etc. Incidentally, greetings are usually sent at the suggestion of those who would like to receive them. Thus the President's official encouragement of organized religion is accompanied by one of his major diplomatic tasks because of the relations that obtain among religious groups. One of the complicating factors that official Washington seldom refers to is the fact that Roman Catholic clergy are likely to be Democrats, and Protestant officials (north of the Mason and Dixon line) are likely to be Republicans.

The President is a leader in the legislative process, even though members of Congress may, from time to time, try to resist the fact. Under the American system, there are three co-ordinate branches in the government. But the President constantly makes recommendations with respect to legislation. His aides give careful thought to the timing of a special message, whether on health insurance or on membership in the International Trade Organization. When the President sends a special mes-



sage, it is news. President Truman once remarked to a visiting churchman, who urged action on housing, that Congress was more disposed to listen to local real-estate boards than anyone else on the issue. Congress does listen to local farm bureaus, local trade union councils, local real-estate boards. But Congress also listens to the President. And Congress listens to the real-estate boards on one or two issues, while it listens to the President on many issues. Presidential messages carry influence in Congress beyond other messages. They are usually carefully prepared in first draft by interested departments and polished, edited, revised, or at least scrutinized by presidential aides.

In so large and complex an institution, the aides assume great significance. These latter years provision has been made for appointment of six full-time administrative assistants. They are supposed to possess a "passion for anonymity." These offices were created in the administration of Franklin Roosevelt, because a group of experts found that the President was struggling with more detail than any human being should be called upon to handle. That was in the days prior to World War II. President Truman has never filled all the six offices. These administrative assistants are in addition to the secretaries who handle appointments and press and radio matters. But no matter how many assistants there are in his office, the President must still deal face to face with his Cabinet members and major administrators.

Steps have been taken effectively to relieve the President of the necessity of signing certain routine papers. But the President still signs his name many times a week. Franklin Roosevelt is reported to have said that he could stand the stress and strain of the great decisions at international conferences, but it was the "detail work" in his office that was killing him.

The President is the head diplomat. Many students of the office have referred to the broad range of his powers in conducting the foreign affairs of the nation. The President is charged with responsibility for international relations by the Constitution, no matter to what extent he may at times have to delegate authority. This situation has led quite naturally, in many instances, to the tendency of a President to want to be his own Secretary of State. No other relation has been more delicate and difficult in the American system of government than that of Secretary of State and President. Some Secretaries of State have quite humanly rebelled against the notion of being errand boys of the President. But the simple fact is that the State Department works in the name of the President.

In the year 1936, Justice Sutherland of the United States Supreme Court referred in an opinion to "the very delicate, plenary and exclusive power of the President as the sole organ of the federal government in the field of international relations." The language acquires significance when one recalls that Justice Sutherland was known to scrutinize every aspect of presidential power, and to have been critical of increase in that power. Justice Sutherland was possibly only echoing the words of John Marshall who, as early as 1799, wrote of the President as "the sole organ of the nation in its external relations, and its sole representative with foreign nations."

The President is, or can be, a voice of the people on many occasions. It is said that Theodore Roosevelt was the favorite author of the farmers of the nation of his day, and Franklin Roosevelt was skillful in detecting popular sentiments and proclaiming messages in relation to them. The President is charged with issuing to Congress an annual message on the state of the union. This has often been a definite suggestion as to what the state of the union ought to be. Thus the writer of the message on the state of the union must inevitably reckon with the varied groups and interests of the nation. He must speak to please some more than others. A President can voice the aspirations of "men without property" if he wishes, and thus influence affairs of state. He may speak to the intentions of organized labor, organized agriculture, organized business, organized veterans, etc. The President certainly has unusual opportunities for exercising moral leadership.

On these varied duties of the office of President—which some students feel are getting "almost out of hand"—the Presidents themselves have had differing views. Grover Cleveland, it is said, felt he could only do what the Constitution specified he could do. Theodore Roosevelt, according to historians, believed he could do anything not forbidden in the Constitution. Abraham Lincoln took probably the broadest view of presidential power. At a time of crisis he felt that he was preserving the Constitution by preserving the nation, and that he had implied power to use any reasonable means to save the nation.

This recital in practical terms of what the President and his aides, and other government administrators, have to cope with, leads in an ethical evaluation to further questions. To what degree and in what ways may we work with them to achieve better government and to attain social values held by religious bodies? We have seen that those who administer government have to make difficult decisions. They face ethical dilemmas.

Consciously or unconsciously their conduct has moral import. Many government administrators are identified with churches. There is wide recognition among churchmen and public officials of great common interests. For statesmanship and religion have much in common.

We have seen that the determination of policy is in the hands of many persons, not a few. In every area of government responsibility, whether it is social security or economic programs in the Middle East, policy is something in process, made day by day, subject to influences from many sources. Representatives of church agencies are frequently found as members of advisory committees maintained by important administrators. The commissioner of education, for example, regularly meets with a formally constituted advisory committee. There is to convene in 1950 another of the decennial White House conferences on child welfare. A national conference on health was held in 1948; many church people participated. When the Attorney General called a national conference on delinquency, he organized a section on religious aspects in which Roman Catholics, Protestants, and Jews discussed their mutual concerns. It may thus be said that a number of administrators welcome conference with representatives of churches.

These government administrators vary widely in their capacity to exchange ideas, to consult, to explore common interests. Probably half the people in the government are precisely like half the population; they are not found on the church rolls. There are technical men in the government whose world begins and ends with their technical data. There are men and women outside the government who also vary widely in their ability to mediate their knowledge and insight and to engage in appropriate mutual aid. But usually the doors of the public executive are open. Within the offices generally are people who can listen, who are both under orders to hear petitions and willing to learn.

Probably the greatest opportunities of church people come as they themselves search for definitions of the public interest in particular situations. Public policy makers are set upon by many spokesmen with axes to grind for this section or that vocational group. How can the public interest be advanced in the face of relentless group pressures? The man in the public office often needs help. He needs it from people who are capable of seeing the values of social services in the long run, of research in human relations that may not be commercially practicable, of conscientious service performed without adequate economic reward.

Special opportunities also face those who can come to government

with perhaps less of the partisan spirit than many others must come. One of the major facts in the Washington scene today is the break-up of party lines on most issues. The parties are plainly divided on the great issues. Those who come with an interest in education, or child welfare, or immigration, or United Nations, will find interested persons in both parties.

To be effective in relation to public administration, church people require vision, knowledge, and great convictions. We need not only alert interest but also sustained interest. Vague good will without some knowledge of issues and dilemmas is of little avail. Church people often push for a measure vigorously under the prodding of one or a few people concerned; then when a measure becomes law, church people may know little of its significance, and may pay no attention to its administration. A lonely administrator may struggle on without the sympathy and interest of those who helped create his job. The chief need is for church people to act *responsibly* in relation to the total government process rather than impetuously and briefly in relation to particulars.

# The Emancipation of the Word of God

EDWIN LEWIS

ONE OF THE SPEAKERS at the 1948 Amsterdam Assembly, describing the spiritual situation in Germany since the collapse of Naziism, said: "Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, was recognized and acclaimed afresh as the sole Word of God. And one of the strongest Bible movements in the history of the Church has taken place during the last few years in the Evangelical Church through its new understanding of the Old and New Testaments."<sup>1</sup>

Christ as "the sole Word of God." In consequence, "a new understanding of the Bible." This fairly describes the new biblicism, but the difference from the old biblicism is nothing less than radical. The old biblicism shackled the revelation; the new biblicism would set it free. The old biblicism was concerned to take the Bible "as is." The new biblicism is critical, discriminating, unafraid. The old biblicism yielded a static authoritarianism. The new biblicism promises to issue in the creation of a dynamic spiritual freedom. Inwardness, certitude, compulsion—these are the authenticating attendants of the Word of God, provided that the Word that controls is truly God's Word and not the words of men. The Word was inseparable from the Spirit in its primal self-communication; he must continue to be inseparable from the Word in its continuing apprehension, renewal, proclamation, and application. "Ye shall know the Word, and the Word shall make you free."

## I

The Protestant Reformation had its origin in the recovery of the Word of God as centered in Jesus Christ. But Lutheranism quickly departed from the epochal insight of Luther, and Calvinism followed suit. It is difficult to see how Calvin could have written some of his biblical expositions if he had really committed himself to his own principle of *testimonium internum Spiritus Sancti*. The radicalism of Luther could be maintained

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<sup>1</sup> *Man's Disorder and God's Design*, Amsterdam Assembly Series, Harper & Brothers, 1948, Vol. I, p. 101.

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only on Luther's presuppositions, and these all too quickly disappeared. The question of authority raised its head. Rupert E. Davies, in *The Problem of Authority in the Continental Reformers*, concludes that neither Luther, Zwingli, nor Calvin ever quite freed himself from "the medieval error, that the source of authority is necessarily to be found in some place wholly outside the individual." It is certainly true that this "error" returned with full force upon their followers. The courage to hold oneself free of external constraints in matters that have to do with the soul and its destiny is not easily acquired nor is it easily kept. It was much easier to be a third-century Christian, secure in a *regula fidei*, believing oneself incorporated into a closely knit organization which already could challenge the civil power, than it was to be a primitive Christian, when there were no written documents to speak of (apart from the Old Testament), no imposing organization, but only a body of testimony calling for response and strangely authenticating itself when the response was made. The true Protestant is a primitive Christian—and he must maintain his "freedom" in the face of the "authoritarianism" of Rome.

But this is no simple matter. The narrow gate quickly proved itself too narrow. Protestantism could not maintain its own principle. Over against hierarchical infallibility is set biblical infallibility. "The Book, the whole Book, and nothing but the Book." Bibliolatry was born.

Not many people, says Troeltsch, are so constituted as to be able to dispense with objective standards. That may be so, but it remains that externality began to bear its inevitable fruitage in the checking of creative spontaneity. Divine authority was invoked on behalf of folklore, legends, superstitions, numbers, genealogies, and the like. Vindictive sentiments uttered by men, and vicious actions performed by men, were ascribed to the leading of God, and then defended with a dialectical subtlety that would have done credit to any scholastic. Theories of plenary inspiration, documentary inerrancy, verbal infallibility—"if we had the original writings!"—came into being, to plague the church for generations. The wind was freely sown, and in due time the whirlwind would be reaped for harvest.

## II

The reaping came with the birth in the nineteenth century of the new natural science and the new historical criticism. Protestantism found itself in a quandary. Inevitably there were serious divisions. Even in the early years of the century, a rationalistic tendency began to make itself felt. Already Lessing had edited the *Wolfenbüttel Fragments* of



Reimarus, with their acute attempt to undermine the credibility of the Gospel narratives, especially in respect of the miracles and the Resurrection. Later, this work of Reimarus was to afford Schweitzer the starting point for his epochal investigation. Paulus of Heidelberg continued the attempt, but it was David Friedrich Strauss in his "first" and "second" *Life of Jesus*, who made it clear to everyone that a life-and-death struggle was on. Strauss was deeply influenced by Hegel, which partly explains why A. M. Fairbairn said of him that he was "neither historian nor critic, but a speculative philosopher," and why he described the *Life* as "a pure creation of the philosophical imagination." The furor created by the book was itself significant: even the politicians took note of it. But its devastating effect was undeniable, in spite of Strauss' numerous efforts to soften it. The "first" *Life* was published in 1835. This was the work translated into English by George Eliot in 1864, a fact which enormously increased its influence. Something comparable to the Strauss rationalism and antisupernaturalism is evident in Renan's *Life of Jesus*, published in 1863, amazingly readable, but frequently approaching pure bathos. In 1865, in England, Sir John Robert Seeley published *Ecce Homo*. Seeley was by profession a historian, and later wrote an important book, *Natural Religion*. He brought to his *Life of Christ* a sanity and objectivity not found in the German rationalists. He undertook to give an account of Christ that would be intrinsically credible, and the book, disturbing as it was to many devout churchmen, is still worth reading for its spirit, its reverence, its balance, its stress on the genuine humanness of Jesus, and its recognition of the large place occupied in his thought by the idea of the Kingdom.

Meanwhile, what had been done with certain parts of the New Testament was being matched in the field of Old Testament criticism. Reimarus had his counterpart in the French physician, Jean Astruc, a Roman Catholic, who called attention to certain features of the Pentateuch which suggested variety of authorship. Various scholars worked with the clue, which eventuated, in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, in what is known as the Graf-Wellhausen documentary theory of the Pentateuch. Other parts of the Old Testament were subjected to similar scientific criticism, and the general result was that Protestantism seemed to be confronted with the loss of its foundations. The spread of the new conception of the creative and natural processes served to deepen the despair which had seized so many minds.

There were, of course, able scholars, working in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, who were not deceived by merely *a priori*

criticism, and who believed that whatever was proven to be true in the new science and the new criticism was to be humbly accepted and the Bible understood accordingly. They did their work, however, in an unfriendly situation. In 1853, Frederick Denison Maurice, then Professor of Divinity in King's College, London, published a volume, *Theological Essays*. The volume led to his deposition as a "heretic." One of the charges brought against Maurice was based on his denial that "eternal" in the New Testament necessarily meant "everlasting"! The idea, he held, was qualitative rather than durational. In 1860, seven scholars published the sensational *Essays and Reviews*. This was quickly followed by a discussion of the Hexateuch on highly critical lines by John William Colenso, an Anglican bishop in South Africa. At about the same time, something more definitely constructive was attempted by a group of young Oxford scholars led by Charles Gore. The result of their efforts was the arresting *Lux Mundi*, a bold effort to capture the new positions, in both natural science and biblical criticism, for an elucidation of the Christian faith. Both the *Essays and Reviews* group and the *Lux Mundi* group met severe criticism, and Colenso barely escaped deposition. Even Benjamin Jowett, the great Master of Balliol and the translator of Plato, did not escape the storm. He was the personal friend of some of the authors of *Essays and Reviews*, and he was known to champion the cause of Free Churchmen at Oxford. Jowett promoted the biblical criticism movement, in particular with a volume on *The Epistles of St. Paul* and with an essay on *The Interpretation of Scripture*. As a consequence, he was for a while forbidden the University pulpit, and was threatened with the withholding of his salary as Professor of Greek.

As was to be expected, Matthew Arnold, true to his devotion to "Sweetness and Light," and determined that at all costs "culture must prevail," offered his solution of the problem in *Literature and Dogma*. His thesis was simple enough: realize that the Bible is a body of ancient literature, to be treated accordingly, and concern will vanish. Yet it was a niece of Matthew Arnold, Mrs. Humphry Ward, who in 1888 published the novel, *Robert Elsmere*. It was in no sense a great book, but it created a sensation, partly because of the family out of which it came. The book described how a young clergyman was torn from his traditional moorings by the new knowledge and the new criticism, and came to rest in a position that combined the rationalism of Strauss and his successors with the noble humanitarianism of Seeley.

There were great numbers, however, who clung stubbornly to their

biblicism. They were the people who could find complete satisfaction in the rolling eloquence of Canon Liddon's Bampton Lectures on *The Divinity of Our Lord* or in the quiet persuasiveness of F. W. Farrar's *Life of Christ*, which left in the mind of the reader no haunting sense of doubt because there had been none in the mind of the writer. It would be ungracious, however, not to mention the fact that Farrar revealed a sturdy independence in his *Eternal Hope*, both in the theme of the book itself, and in the way he faced the storm the book evoked. Perhaps nothing dramatizes more completely the tenacity of the prevailing biblicism than the volume of Edmund Gosse, *Father and Son*. In it, the famous essayist and critic tells the story of his relations with his father, Philip Henry Gosse. The elder Gosse was a natural scientist, a member of learned societies, and a recognized authority on marine life. But he was a complete biblical infallibilist, a leader of a small Bible sect in the south of England. He attempted to train his young son in the same tradition, and with apparent success until the son, in his teens, left home. Then the inevitable tension began to manifest itself. The visits of father and son became increasingly painful affairs. The last letter printed by Gosse in the book is one he received from his father after such a visit, and one reads it with sadness. A man of personal charm and culture might have been held to the Christian faith instead of becoming a virtual skeptic, had he received wiser training.

How widespread was the attitude of the elder Gosse is evident from the treatment accorded to eminent biblical scholars in the closing decades of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the twentieth. W. Robertson Smith was removed in 1881 from the chair of Old Testament at Aberdeen, Scotland; on the American continent, Henry Preserved Smith at Lane Seminary, George C. Workman at Toronto, Charles A. Briggs at Union Seminary, and Henry H. Mitchell at the Boston University School of Theology, were all subjected to humiliating experiences. Mitchell's book, *For the Benefit of My Creditors*, is enough to make the heavens weep—as doubtless it did! Similar ecclesiastical excoiation, not unsupported by a fearful laity, was poured on the notable English Wesleyan Methodist biblical scholar and theologian, Joseph Agar Beet, in his case for nothing more serious than his challenging, in the spirit of Maurice and Farrar, the accuracy of the ordinary understanding of the New Testament teaching concerning future punishment! And there are those who will still remember how leaders of the same church proposed to treat George Jackson for his alleged “advanced” views. It was indeed a spec-

tacle that sons of John Wesley were prepared to repudiate a man who could write, as Jackson did, a book entitled, *The Fact of Conversion*.

Easily the most dramatic and widely publicized "trial" of an Old Testament scholar was that of W. Robertson Smith. The story might well be read in connection with that of the youthful McLeod Campbell, who thirty odd years before had been driven from the ministry of the Church of Scotland for preaching that God's love embraced all mankind! The trial could have split the Free Church of Scotland, had Smith himself but given the word. Smith was young, but he was the outstanding Old Testament scholar of his Church. He had, however, challenged traditional conceptions, as anyone will realize who knows his *Old Testament in the Jewish Church* and his *Prophets of Israel*. The trial was in process for some two years. How sharp was the division may be seen from the fact that at one point a motion that would have greatly modified the charges was lost by only a single vote, 321-320. The final vote to remove Smith from his chair was taken at the Assembly of 1881, and stood 394-231 for removal. One of Smith's strongest supporters throughout the whole trial was A. B. Bruce, who was to write books which would be read by every Protestant minister throughout the world, such as *The Theology of Paul*, *Apologetics*, *The Humiliation of Christ*, and *The Training of the Twelve*. After the final vote was taken, and before the sentence was pronounced, Bruce obtained the floor, and made a noble speech in behalf of his friend. He ended by saying:

I cannot sit down without expressing my sorrow and shame at what is about to be done. I never expected to see the day when such a spectacle could be witnessed in our Church. . . . We humbly think [our Mother Church] is doing a great wrong, but we count surely on a reaction and a noble repentance in which she will cancel the ostracism which she is about to exercise against her ablest servant and devoted son.

What Bruce anticipated more than came to pass. Another young Smith, this time George Adam, was given temporary charge of W. R. Smith's classes during the period of suspension. He later became professor of Old Testament at Glasgow, and in 1910 became Principal of that very University of Aberdeen whose classrooms had once been denied to his namesake. No man did more than George Adam Smith to spread abroad the true understanding of the Old Testament. Did he not, in 1899, give the Yale Lectures on *Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament*? Yet his "critical" views were substantially those of the Smith his Church had removed! Indeed, the views were those that came to prevail in the church at large, although the character of the obstacles to

be overcome may be further inferred from the fact that even so revered a figure as that of Mr. Gladstone was moved to enter the lists on the side of tradition with a volume, *The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*. This was at the turn of the century, but more than a decade earlier Gladstone had written: "The Old Testament . . . is now far more than the New the battleground of belief," and in a letter to Lord Acton in 1889 he declared that "the Old Testament destructives now have possession of the public ear."

### III

The opening years of the century reveal a condition which makes the emergence of the so-called Modernist-Fundamentalist controversy entirely understandable. There were men of great competence who may be said to have sought to carry on the spirit of the authors of *Lux Mundi*. They were found in Great Britain, in Europe, and on the American continent. It would be invidious to select names, but one whose own mind and outlook were being formed in those days may perhaps be allowed to acknowledge a lasting debt to such men, then writing, as James Denney, R. W. Rogers, A. S. Peake, Wm. Sanday, A. E. Garvie, P. T. Forsyth, H. Wheeler Robinson, A. M. Fairbairn, Milton S. Terry, Adolf Deissmann, James Hope Moulton, Auguste Sabatier, H. J. Holtzmann, B. Weiss, A. B. Davidson, and James Moffatt. In the first decade of the century or so, these men, and many like them, were active, some as Old Testament scholars, some as New Testament scholars, some as theologians. In the main, they were constructive and open-minded, sympathetic as respects the function of literary and historical criticism, but loyal to what could in any proper sense be regarded as the essential features of the Christian faith, one of which was most certainly not a static literal biblicism.

But this was only a part of the story. In Germany, Fr. Delitzsch was waging the *Babel-Bibel* battle, and virtually denying any unique revelation in the Old Testament. Wrede, in *The Messiah-Secret in the Gospels*, was declaring that it was impossible to construct, from our available sources, a critically tenable account of the life of Jesus. Harnack, in the famous Berlin lectures of 1899 on *The Essence of Christianity*, was revealing the ultimate logic of his Ritschlianism in the reduction of Christianity to little more than a statement of principles already present in the Hebrew prophets: "Not the Son, but the Father alone," said Harnack, "belongs to the Gospel as Jesus proclaimed it." Kaltoff was declaring that Christianity originated as a purely social and economic movement, and that a particular person named Jesus had little enough to do with it. Paul



Schmiedel was propagating his theory that there were nine "foundation" passages in the Gospels for a scientific life of Jesus, and these were passages which affirmed his fallibility, his ignorance, or some other limitation. Anything not compatible with these "nine" was to be ruled out. Arthur Drews was broaching his "myth theory" of the origin of the Gospel Portrait, and was finding support from J. M. Robertson in England and from W. B. Smith, a mathematician at Tulane University in America. W. Bousset, in a volume entitled *Jesus*, eliminated from the Gospels everything which suggested that there was anything unusual in the *person* of the Master. More fantastic still was the view that Jesus was an unstable psychotic, an interesting fact considering the attitude to Jesus of present-day psychiatrists. The "insanity" theory evoked a reply from an American scholar, Walter E. Bundy, in *The Psychic Health of Jesus*, as the "myth" theory evoked the "reply" of T. J. Thorburn, *The Mythical Interpretation of the Gospels*, of which James Denney said that if such a book had to be written at all, this was the way to do it.

The *Encyclopaedia Biblica* was popularizing a destructive radicalism, and T. K. Cheyne, one of the editors of the *Biblica*, boldly and baldly put the case in *Bible Problems and Their Solution*. Kirsopp Lake was demolishing the evidence for the Resurrection, and J. M. Thompson would soon do the same with the evidences for the miracles. Percy Gardner's *Historic View of the New Testament* was disturbing even to those who appreciated Gardner's interpretive skill. The popular young minister of the City Temple, London, Reginald J. Campbell, was advocating, in *The New Theology*, a type of mystical pantheism which brought him into an open antagonism with a fellow Congregationalist, P. T. Forsyth. Campbell later left the Congregational ministry; in due time repudiated *The New Theology*, and sought and received ordination in the Anglican Church; and in that church came to a position of great influence as a teacher of a markedly conservative view of Christianity, as may be seen in his volume, *Christian Faith in Modern Light*. It was another Congregational minister, Richard Roberts—later, like R. J. Campbell, to return to a much more conservative position—who wrote the article, *Jesus or Christ? An Appeal for Consistency*, which led to the famous *Hibbert Journal* supplement of 1909, in which some eighteen scholars dealt with the pros and cons of Roberts' question. Add to all this the fact that the Bross Prize for 1905 was awarded to James Orr for his volume *The Problem of the Old Testament*, a vigorous attack on the entire critical position, and the prevailing confusion is apparent. And Orr was a colleague of George Adam Smith!



This is in no sense an adequate account, but it may serve to suggest the situation. Nor must it be supposed that the Roman Catholic Church was unaffected by the new criticism. Sufficient evidence of this is provided in Paul Sabatier's Jowett Lectures for 1908, entitled *Modernism*. Sabatier describes the liberalizing movement within the Roman Catholic Church which Pope Pius X labeled "modernism," and which the Pope claimed to analyze in detail in the Syllabus *Lamentabili*, dated July 3, 1907. The Syllabus enumerated sixty-five propositions held to be current, the second one being that the Church's interpretation of the Sacred Books must be regarded as open to revision or modification, and all the propositions are declared "condemned and prescribed." This was followed a little later the same year by a lengthy Encyclical Letter, *Pascendi Gregis*, the text of which may be read in Sabatier. This Encyclical was chiefly instrumental in creating the movement known as Neo-Thomism, since it prescribed that the writings of Thomas should be the basis of theological study in the Church, especially in seminaries and religious houses.

The Encyclical undoubtedly had special reference to Abbé Loisy, who for some years had been under suspicion. Indeed, Friedrich Heiler describes Loisy in a recent monograph as *Der Vater des Katholischen Modernismus*. Loisy had replied to Harnack's *Essence of Christianity* with a little book entitled *The Gospel and the Church*, which largely separated Catholic dogma from any direct and intimate relation with the original Gospel. Rome hardly possessed a more illustrious New Testament scholar than Loisy, but he was subjected to progressive humiliations which issued finally in excommunication. He has told the story in a book which is almost frightening in its exposé of dictatorial methods, entitled, *My Duel with the Vatican*, a good introduction to later volumes of *Memoires*. An almost similar fate, for a largely similar reason, befell the Jesuit priest in England, Father George Tyrrell, one of the great Christian souls of our time. And if there are those who still covet the "security" offered by Rome, let him read the *Marching Orders* of William L. Sullivan, who tells there of his Odyssey from Romanism to Unitarianism, the journey being marked on the way by a series of *Letters to His Holiness*. Sullivan contributed a more concise account to the Second Series of *Contemporary American Theology*, edited by Vergilius Ferm.

#### IV

What was indicated in all this was the necessity of a reconsideration of the whole idea of revelation. The great biblical scholars had naturally

been chiefly interested in questions connected with the text of the Bible, as is evident from W. F. Howard's fascinating Tipple Lectures for 1947, *The Romance of New Testament Scholarship*. The great theologians were concerned chiefly with the creedal question. The appearance in 1913 of A. S. Peake's courageous book, *The Bible, Its Origin, Its Significance, Its Abiding Worth*, combined both interests in a way truly remarkable. His chapter on "The Problem of Biblical Theology" will always be worth reading, and Methodist though he was, he could write in the preface of the book that he was "conscious of a special debt to the writings of Robertson Smith for the general view of what the Bible is."

The blast, however, that shook alike the foundations of liberal New Testament scholarship, conservative theology, and static biblicism, was let loose in 1906 by a brilliant young scholar of Alsace-Lorraine. Until then, few had heard of him. Today, the whole world knows him as Albert Schweitzer. In that year he published a book, *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*, soon to be known by its English title, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. Schweitzer subjected to a searching examination what New Testament criticism throughout the nineteenth century had offered as a credible portrait of Jesus. He declared that the whole portrayal was false and misleading. There was never such a Jesus as was presented: he was a pure fiction. Schweitzer's own conception of the historical Jesus and of his significance may have been—it was!—far from satisfactory. But his researches did at least one thing: they showed that it was impossible to fit Jesus into ready-made categories. Schweitzer's insistence on the "eschatological" element in the thought of Jesus both about himself and about the Kingdom had already been anticipated by Baldensperger, Johannes Weiss, and Loisy; it would be repeated in Tyrrell and many others; and it would blossom in the "realized eschatology" of C. H. Dodd and others of like mind in our own day. Its immediate significance was to restore the centrality of the mysterious Jesus to his own Gospel. It restored, too, the transcendent character of the Kingdom. Neither Jesus nor the Kingdom was to be accounted for in terms of rational process. The unexpected, the unpredictable, the cataclysmic—these are inescapable features of the Gospels. The very things which the critics had been trying to get rid of as "unhistorical" were precisely what had created the "history." The dramatic career of Schweitzer has perhaps served to throw the significance of his New Testament work somewhat out of perspective, but its epochal character is undeniable.

Within a few years, the blast let loose by Schweitzer was followed by

another. This time it originated with a young Swiss pastor, Karl Barth, who in 1919 published the first edition of his Commentary on Romans. It was an altogether new kind of commentary, both in its method and in its disclosure of "the strange new world within the Bible." This "disclosure" was to become increasingly the characteristic of Barth's work. He challenged the church to face the fact of an "absolute revelation of God," to be taken just as it was, and to be taken with complete seriousness. The exaggerations and aberrations of Barth, and of the "dialectical" and "crisis" theology in general, must never be allowed to detract from the fact that he did more than any other one man to connect the Bible again with a specific revealing activity on the part of God, climaxed in Jesus Christ as the "Word-made-flesh," in and by whom God at once judged the world as lost in sin, and, of his unmerited grace, offered it salvation. The Bible was not the story of man's search for God, but of God's search for man. The rapid spread of the so-called "Barthian movement" is ample evidence to the sense of futility which had been created by radical naturalism, humanistic liberalism, and theological compromise.

Back of Barth could be seen the towering figure of the melancholy Dane, Søren Kierkegaard. Many of Kierkegaard's contemporaries in the Danish Church of the middle of the last century had been strongly influenced by Hegel. One result of that influence was the endangering of the "crisis" note in Christianity. Every Christian verity, including the Incarnation itself, was held to be explicable in terms of a smoothly working impersonal dialectic. When the metaphysical distinction between God and man is broken down, Christianity loses its radical character. Kierkegaard saw this happening, even in so able a theologian as Martensen. He was led to reaffirm this distinction; to confront the Hegelian "both-and" with an uncompromising "either-or"; to proclaim the complete helplessness of man to throw a bridge across the gulf that separates the creature from the Creator; to assert that if the gulf were ever to be bridged, it would have to be from the divine side; and to announce as the central theme of Scripture the fact that in the "existential moment" God did actually cross the gulf, and that he had done this supremely in and as Jesus Christ who, Man of Sorrows as he was, was literally *God incognito* among men. Salvation came of faith that Jesus Christ was indeed this and no other.

This emphasis on Christ as the sacrificial and redeeming irruption of God into our human history—the *totaliter aliter* become *totaliter ejus generis*, which is John's "Word-become-flesh"—is what Barth sought to recover. This meant nothing else than divine revelation—revelation abso-

lute. Here was a specific, concrete self-disclosure on the part of God, philosophically inexplicable, scripturally attested, apprehensible only to faith, but undeniably so to him who "believed." *Sola fide*. The Reformation principle, which is to say the original Christian principle, was again laid bare. The Bible was no longer a book to be apologized for. The church was built on the Word of God; the church lived by the Word of God; the church's one testimony must be to the Word of God. Revelation is central.

## V

But we must not be misled here. Barth and those who came to conceive of revelation as he did had not the least thought of reviving a static biblicism. Because the vital connection between revelation and the Bible has been freshly realized, to the great quickening of Christian hearts and minds, it does not follow that all the results of patient biblical criticism are now to be ignored, and that we are again where we were before Reimarus and Anstruc initiated the critical movement. The critical movement has issued in our time in the emancipation of the Word of God from identification with the words of men, and there will be no return to the bondage. Rudolf Bultmann, for example, is an ardent Barthian. Yet he holds an extremely critical view of the Gospels. The one certain thing about the new biblicism is that it is not a revamped fundamentalism. If anyone supposes it is, let him read the symposium, *Revelation*, edited by John Baillie and Hugh Martin; H. Wheeler Robinson, *Redemption and Revelation*; Cunliffe-Jones, *The Authority of the Biblical Revelation*; H. H. Rowley, *The Relevance of the Bible*; E. P. Dickie, *Revelation and Response*; Paul Minear, *The Eyes of Faith*; C. H. Dodd, *The Gospel and History*; Vincent Taylor, *Jesus and His Sacrifice*; Martin Dibelius, *The Message of Jesus Christ*, especially the "Explanation" in Part II; and D. M. Baillie, *God Was in Christ*. Probably not one of these writers would wish to be called a Barthian; but not one of them would disagree with the substance of what Barth wrote in *The Word of God and the Word of Man*. The last thing that these men would wish to see as a result of the recovery of the Bible witness to God would be a return to the blind credulity of unimaginative verbalism. The religion of the Bible is a religion of revelation, but the revelation is not to be mechanically equated with the biblical language. The "Word" is to be reached through the "words." What is unfortunately being called "faith in the Bible" can only mean confidence that the Bible witnesses to God in his Word: the "faith" that saves and transforms and empowers is *faith in him to whom the Bible witnesses*.

For "we have our treasure in earthen vessels." This, indeed, is the burden of what is known as Form-Criticism, the claim that the first disciples and teachers threw into "forms" determined by the occasion the message of Jesus and the faith that had come of their experience of him. This means that only occasionally may we suppose that we have the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus. The supreme example of a devised "form" for the embodiment and proclamation of that Living Word of God which is Christ is the Fourth Gospel itself. The Fourth Gospel is the most profoundly Christian book ever written; yet we do not know who wrote it; we do not know when it was written; we do not know that any one of its long discourses or its extended metaphors or its carefully worked out analogies was ever spoken *verbatim* by Jesus—indeed, considering the radical vocabulary differences of the Fourth Gospel from the vocabulary of the Synoptics, it is highly probable that it was not. Nevertheless, the Fourth Gospel confronts us with the Living Word; it witnesses to an Act of God in which God himself was finally because redemptively disclosed; this Act was Christ, the climax of numerous lesser Acts of God. Yet while lesser, still his Acts, still disclosing his character, still making known his will and purpose, still apprehended by men in varying degrees as the Holy Spirit could teach them, and still attested by men in word and action according to their individual powers. When the lesser Acts are read in the light of the supreme and final Act, and when the Old Testament record arising because of these lesser Acts is read in the light of the New Testament record arising because of this supreme and final Act—when this is done, then we see in what sense the very faith that brings us under the judging and redeeming power of the Acts of God which are his Word, his Self-Revelation and Self-Communication, also sets us free from bondage to the letter. The words of men—these are instrumental; that to which they are instrumental is the Word of God.

No one of our contemporaries is more clear at this point than Emil Brunner. In his most important book, *The Mediator*, Brunner equates the Word of God with the Revelation of God. The *form* of this Word is divine action in history evoking a faith-response in men. Herein is *The Divine-Human Encounter*. In the book of that title, Brunner left it uncertain whether the issue of this encounter included the apprehension of truth: the certainty *that* God is seemed not to be carried over into a certainty as to *what* God is. In the later volume, *Revelation and Reason*, this uncertainty is removed. The truth of revelation is distinguished from the truth of reason; but it is held that "revelation and reason possess one



common element; they both claim truth" (p. 362). God makes himself known by events—but what do the events *mean*? That is to say, what *truth* do they convey? The prophet had this truth made known to him by the Holy Spirit, and as he saw it so he proclaimed it. But no man can ever speak the Word of God in its purity and completeness. Always the Word is limited and obscured by the human personality. The prophet and the Word are never the same. The Word is complete, final, and absolute only as it is "made flesh." Christ is the Word of God come alive. He does not merely *proclaim* the Word that has been given to him: he is himself the Word. The Gospels describe him and bear witness to him, but the Gospels are not the Word. Unless the Gospels lead us to the Living Word which is the only reason why they came into being, they remain the questionable words of men. It is that Living Word to which faith is the response. It is by that Living Word that the church is created, nurtured, and empowered. To make known the Living Word to other men, and to seek to bring the world under its judging and redeeming power, is the task alike of the individual Christian and of the Church.

This is the new biblicism. That it brings its own problems is evident. The Amsterdam appointment of a Commission to consider these problems and in due time prepare a pronouncement, is itself suggestive of the implications which go with the accepted distinction between God's self-disclosure and the witness to it in Scripture. For example, if Jesus Christ is himself the Living Word of God, significant primarily as God's supremely revealing and redeeming Act, so that "saving faith" is faith that this precisely is what Christ is and what he means—if this is so, and if the Gospels are so many witnesses to him as thus understood, is it possible to see the Gospels any longer as other than "instrumental"? In that case, what happens to the supposition that the heart of the Gospel is in the "words" and "teachings" of Jesus? Perhaps the new biblicism will compel the reconsideration of the whole Christological question and by consequence of the whole soteriological question. Perhaps the emancipation of the Word of God will have for corollary the emancipation of the Christian mind. The emancipated mind, however, will still be bound: it will be bound to an invisibility conceived as intrinsically possessed of absolute authority, but still an "invisibility" held in faith.



# The Challenge of Neo-Malthusianism

LYNDON B. PHIFER

## I

IT ALL BEGAN with a little book with a big title: *An Essay on the Principle of Population as It Affects the Future Improvement of Society, with Remarks on the Speculations of Mr. Godwin, M. Condorcet, and Other Writers*. The author was a Church of England clergyman named Thomas Malthus. The book appeared in 1798. It was widely read. Malthus put forward the view that population, unchecked, increases in a geometrical ratio (1, 2, 4, 8, 16), while subsistence increases only in an arithmetical ratio (1, 2, 3, 4, 5); that population always increases up to the limits of the means of subsistence; and that it is prevented from increasing beyond these limits only by the checks of war, famine, and pestilence and by the influence of poverty and vice.

The publication of Malthus' essay aroused a chatter of controversy. Bitter abuse was directed at him by clergymen, social workers, and others. Undaunted by these attacks, Malthus set to work collecting material bearing upon rates of increase of population in all times and in all countries. Five years later he published the second edition of his essay in an entirely different form. This time it was a long, soberly worded, scholarly treatise crammed with detailed facts and statistics and abundantly documented. And he modified his thesis to this extent: While maintaining the principle that the universal tendency of population is to outrun the means of subsistence, he minimized the question of mathematical ratios. The main contribution of his second edition, however, was advocacy of a preventive check he termed "moral restraint." By this term Malthus meant the postponement of the age of marriage accompanied by strict sexual continence. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* article on Malthus comments that "the views and methods advocated by those modern upholders of small families who call themselves neo-Malthusians would have received nothing but condemnation from Malthus." The clergyman published several subsequent revised editions of his work, the sixth and last appearing in 1826. He died in 1834. To the end he remained pessimistic in his general out-

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look upon the progress of mankind, for he had scant faith in the capacity of the human race to regulate its numbers by exercising prudence and restraint.

Malthus' views on population profoundly influenced public opinion in the first half of the nineteenth century. A chance reading of Malthus' essay, in which the phrase "struggle for existence" struck an answering chord, led Charles Darwin to find the key to biological change in the process of natural selection brought about by this struggle. Later it became common in academic circles to disparage Malthusianism as out of date. If you went to college and graduate school before 1920, as this writer did, you probably will recall nothing favorable to Malthusianism in your lecture notes taken in sociology or economics classes.

One of the severest critics of Malthusianism in the latter part of the nineteenth century was Henry George, who devoted an entire section of *Progress and Poverty*—namely, Book II—to the Malthusian theory. One chapter outlines the theory, its genesis and support; another examines inferences from facts, another inferences from analogy, and a fourth boldly sets forth to disprove the Malthusian theory.

"I assert," writes the great proponent of social ownership of land values,

that in any given state of civilization a greater number of people can collectively be better provided for than a smaller. I assert that the injustice of society, not the niggardliness of nature, is the cause of the want and misery which the current theory attributes to overpopulation. I assert that the new mouths which an increasing population calls into existence require no more food than the old ones, while the hands they bring with them can, in the natural order of things, produce more. I assert that, other things being equal, the greater the population, the greater the comfort which an equitable distribution of wealth would give to each individual. I assert that in a state of equality the natural increase of population would constantly tend to make every individual richer instead of poorer.<sup>1</sup>

He goes on to say:

The denser the population, the more minute becomes the subdivision of labor, the greater the economies of production and distribution, and, hence, the very reverse of the Malthusian doctrine is true; and, within the limits in which we have reason to suppose increase would still go on, in any given state of civilization a greater number of people can produce a larger proportionate amount of wealth and more fully support their wants than can a smaller number.<sup>2</sup>

Contrary to popular opinion, Henry George was not a purveyor of a panacea, and his social interests had a broader base than the single tax.

<sup>1</sup> Henry George, *Progress and Poverty*, copyright, 1879, by Henry George. New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1914, pp. 141-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150.

Yet it is clear, in the light of later developments, that while he undoubtedly made an economic contribution to the social control of the means of subsistence, he did not succeed in disproving the Malthusian theory. The trend in present-day scientific thought is in the direction of Thomas Malthus, not Henry George, and even far beyond Malthus. The neo-Malthusians are the scientific thinkers of our day, not in unrelated fields like population studies, biology, or applied sociology, but in that larger realm which can best be described by the term "ecology," defined as "the mutual relations between organisms and their environment."

## II

It seems that the population experts started the modern movement loosely termed "neo-Malthusianism." In 1945, Guy Irving Burch, director of the Population Reference Bureau, and Elmer Pendell, assistant professor of economics at Baldwin-Wallace College, issued a little book called *Population Roads to Peace or War*,<sup>3</sup> later retitled *Human Breeding and Survival*.<sup>4</sup> This has gone through several editions, including a thirty-five cent pocket-book edition. They contend:

That men now possess the technical ability to produce in great abundance the necessities of daily life is true. But that men can produce enough for "everyone" is certainly not "beyond any doubt." The huge death rates of two-thirds of the earth's people indicate that man is not producing enough for healthful living; and this fact suggests how much more is needed to provide for even the present population of the world. Yet population is very much on the move, and "everyone" fifty years from now will mean something quite different from what it means today. In 1900 "everyone" meant some 1,600,000,000 people. Today, notwithstanding two world wars and very high death rates in Asia and parts of Europe, it means about 2,250,000,000 people; and by the end of this century, at recent rates of increase, it may mean as many as 3,300,000,000 people.<sup>5</sup>

Some population experts say that, given time, populations will level off and stabilize themselves. For this, say the more vocal ecologists, there is not time. The modern world has gone down twice, and only extraordinary measures can keep it from going down again, this time, perhaps, for keeps.

Burch and Pendell concede that eventually science and technology can free all the earth's people from want. But they insist that this cannot be done by increasing production of goods without at the same time

<sup>3</sup> Population Reference Bureau, 1507 M Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

<sup>4</sup> Penguin Books, Inc., 245 Fifth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. Revised edition, copyright, 1947, by Guy Irving Burch and Elmer Pendell.

<sup>5</sup> Burch and Pendell, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

bringing under humane and intelligent control man's biological power to multiply. And they do not mean the "moral restraint," late marriage, and sexual continuance advocated by Thomas Malthus. They mean widespread use of contraceptives, voluntary sterilization of many males and females, and involuntary sterilization of confirmed and feeble-minded criminals. Their studies do not point to war as a population controller. On the contrary, war tends toward population increase. Genocide, epidemics, and mass starvation, while effective reducers of population, are ruled out as inhumane and unnecessary under the presently effective means of preventing births. Burch and Pendell do not see a remedy for the malady in mass migrations. They pin their hope to widespread sterilization and birth control along with stricter and more uniform marriage standards. A concluding chapter on "The Vital Revolution" finds some lessons in the Old and New Testaments on the subject of population control. These Old Testament references are cited: Ezekiel 5:7-8; Isaiah 49:19-20; Jeremiah 15:9; Amos 1:15; Deuteronomy 7:7; Isaiah 9:3. These population experts appeal to Jesus, who, they say, "emphasized quality rather than quantity of human life."<sup>6</sup>

### III

It is clear that the neo-Malthusians have gone far beyond Malthus in suggested remedies, and the good English clergyman probably would disown them. One and all insist that his principle of population growth in relation to subsistence is basically sound.

But they do not stop there. The writers who have popularized neo-Malthusianism as recently as 1948, when their best sellers first appeared, say very little about Thomas Malthus. They have left him far behind in developing their new science of ecology. I refer to Fairfield Osborn, author of *Our Plundered Planet*; and to William Vogt, whose much discussed and well written *Road to Survival* is provocatively controversial.

Osborn, too, rejects war as a population control, pointing out that in the last century, when wars were common all over the earth, its population almost doubled. He points out the limitations of the earth's arable surface and, like other ecologists, insists that our natural resources of water, soil, plants, and wild animal life are being dangerously depleted. Those of us who attended the famous Lincoln conference on rural life in 1947 will recall hearing, on a very hot night, despite loud-speaker difficulty, Hugh Bennett, United States director of soil conservation, declare

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.

that if the atom bomb doesn't get us, soil depletion will. Despite the threat of losing our last remaining topsoil, the Eightieth Congress cut appropriations to Bennett's Soil Conservation Service.

Osborn focuses our attention upon the natural life cycle in its relation to the soil and insists that "fertilizers are supplements and nothing more. They merely aid in restoring certain elements to depleted soil. Water supply, forests, grass, and wild animal life are just as essential to a healthy, productive environment."<sup>7</sup> Through an imbalance of these forces, what may have taken a thousand years to build can be and in places has been removed by erosion in a year or even in a single day. Proper agricultural methods, Osborn says, can prevent this destructive cycle of events. The indiscriminate cutting down or burning of forests is seen as perhaps the most widespread cause of soil erosion. Reservoirs become clogged with silt as a result of soil washing down from slopes. Partly for this reason Vogt, in *Road to Survival*, is extremely critical of TVA. He charges that the experiment was begun at the wrong end—in the river valleys instead of on the hilltops; and that the flooding of arable land was a serious mistake. He hopes that a Missouri Valley Authority, if established, will avoid these mistakes. At any rate, both authors condemn the "mining" of crop lands for quick returns, denounce the selfish sheepherders of the western plains and mountains for overgrazing these valuable lands, and blister the selfish lumbering interests that shamelessly lobby in Congress for the privilege of denuding our forest reserves without restraint. Both are critical of free enterprise because of its ruthless destruction of natural resources on which humanity depends for survival. Vogt says:

The methods of free competition and the application of the profit motive have been disastrous to the land. Railroads received great areas of land on which they settled the men and women whose grandchildren created the dust bowl. Cut-throat competition in forest exploitation has long since turned us from a creditor to a debtor nation in terms of forest resources. We are forced to import timber and wood pulp while our own lands, best suited to its production, are being washed into the oceans. . . .

Business has been turned loose to poison thousands of streams and rivers with industrial wastes; and hundreds of cities are spending millions of dollars so that they may safely drink the waste dumped into the rivers upstream. Recently a new gadget that grinds up garbage and washes it down the kitchen sink has been promoted. There is, apparently, no way to hold its manufacturer accountable for the increased pollution he is introducing into inland waters. . . . The manufacturer cashes in, and the American citizen pays the cost of environmental resistance.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Fairfield Osborn, *Our Plundered Planet*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1948, p. 49.

<sup>8</sup> William Vogt, *Road to Survival*. New York: William Sloane Associates, 1948, p. 34.



Except in a few small areas of the Old World, forests are not being harvested on a sustained-yield basis; they are being inexorably wiped out. While the writer was in California last spring, a public collection was being taken to purchase and thus preserve the southern and larger grove of Calaveras big trees (sequoias) from being cut down by profit-seeking lumbering interests.

At the same time water tables are falling, and more rivers are getting out of hand. Vogt says:

There are no untapped grasslands; we had better enjoy our steaks now, since there will be many less of them within the lifetime of most Americans. . . . We must develop our sense of time and think of the availability of beefsteaks not only for this Saturday but for the Saturdays of our old age and of our children and grandchildren's youth. The day has long since passed when a senator may callously demand, "What has posterity ever done for me?" Posterity is of our making, as is the world in which it will have to live.<sup>9</sup>

One of the greatest obstacles to survival is modern man's highly developed system of sanitation, which every year sends millions of tons of mineral wealth and organic matter, taken from his farms, forests, and grasslands, to be lost in the sea. Vogt declares:

Even we fortunate Americans are pressing hard on our means of subsistence. Our neighbors on five continents know what it means to find their cupboards bare. There is no phase of our civilization that is not touched by wasting death. There is hardly an aspect of human activity, through all the complex span of our lives, that does not, in some open or occult manner, feel the chill of scarcity's damp breath.<sup>10</sup>

The ecologists see wild life as an essential factor in a normal cycle of life and death. Vogt points to the time when game was so common in most of the United States that living off the country was no problem. The heath hen, an eastern variety of the prairie chicken, was so easily shot along the Atlantic seaboard that it was one of the cheapest foods. Passenger pigeons moved from north to south in flocks estimated by trustworthy observers in thousands of millions. The wild turkey was shot for the pot from New England to Texas and became a symbol of New World abundance. In those days our forests grew in such pure or nearly pure stands that it was said that a squirrel could have traveled from the Atlantic to the Mississippi without ever touching the ground. Some seventy-five million bison drifted north and south with the changing seasons. Antelope were so common that mountain men shot them as carelessly as the modern hunter kills cottontails.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 79, 286.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 286.



A resource we don't worry much about is our underground waters. Throughout much of the United States the water table is falling. About Baltimore, as a correlative of erosion and siltation, the water table dropped 146 feet in thirty-two years.

Vogt reminds us that the electric-power monopoly has fought the orderly development of our watersheds and that ninety-five per cent of the timber-growing capacity of our nation is on private lands held by four or five million private owners. Some European countries have found the solution in public ownership of forest lands, as in our system of state and national forests, and by controlled cutting that requires official permission before a single tree may be felled. The last system would be odious to our great lumbering interests, but it may be imperative if we are to survive on this planet.

One tenet in the gospel of the ecologists disturbs me. They seem to suggest that humanitarian and missionary efforts to heal the diseases of mankind are misguided and ultimately harmful unless those efforts are accompanied by population-control projects such as birth control. Thus Vogt writes:

Well-meaning public health authorities, completely ignoring the problem of how millions of Latin Americans are to be fed, have helped to reduce the death rate. Yellow fever has been banished from most of Latin America. Malaria has been significantly reduced over wide areas. Smallpox is disappearing. Despite the growing difficulties occasioned by shrinking supplies, drinking water has been improved in many cities to such an extent that intestinal diseases, the most effective factor limiting populations, have dropped sharply. Like most of the rest of the world, most Latin American countries are facing the very pressing question of how to feed more young, hungry mouths.<sup>11</sup>

And listen to Gerald F. Winfield, whose book *China: the Land and the People*, is being favorably reviewed these days:

The ultimate purpose of the medical-health service in China is not solely to treat illness and save lives nor even to prevent disease but to contribute to the long-range well-being of the entire population by bringing about a drop in the birth rate to equal the drop in the death rate, to assure the nation of fewer but healthier citizens living in greater economic security. It is only through this process that the standard of living can be raised to a point at which full health protection for everyone can be made available and paid for. . . .

Only as parents become concerned with the protection of the children they have against the economic losses represented by additional children will they take the trouble to limit the number of children they bring into the world. When life is cheap, children are cheaply born.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 164.

<sup>12</sup> Gerald F. Winfield, *China: The Land and the People*. New York: William Sloane Associates, 1948, pp. 346-47.

One can see the soundness of Winfield's views and at the same time raise the question: Must we couple with our Christian ministry of healing in overpopulated lands (and population experts are saying that our own country is practically on the verge of overpopulation) a demand that parents who and whose children are healed shall practice birth control? Must disease prevention wait upon the widespread use of contraceptives? Surely not! We must work at both ends of the problem, but not make the work of healing and prevention conditional upon acceptance of a birth-control program.

As to birth control, Vogt calls for a new approach to contraceptives, saying that old methods are no longer good enough. In areas like Puerto Rico, where three quarters of the houses have no running water, current contraceptive methods cannot possibly be effective. Hindus, with an average annual income of nineteen dollars, are perhaps more in need of birth control than any other people; but they cannot afford contraceptive devices. A cheaper, dependable method that can easily be used by women is indispensable. Vogt says that if the United States had spent two billion dollars developing such a contraceptive, instead of the atom bomb, it would have contributed far more to our national security and, at the same time, have promoted a better living standard for the entire world.

Let's have a bit of summary at this point: The English clergyman, in advance of his time, saw the situation clearly but had an inadequate remedy. Henry George confuted Malthus' theory to his own satisfaction but did not convince modern population experts and students of environment. The latter insist that the problem must be attacked by two great efforts: first, control of population through birth control, sterilization, and marriage laws; secondly, through social control of natural resources.

#### IV

Now, what is the challenge of neo-Malthusianism to Christians in general and particularly to preachers, teachers, and lesson writers?

First, is it not to re-examine our relation as human beings to our environment? Such re-examination should not be done uncritically. Facts presented by Burch, Pendell, Osborn, Vogt, and other scientists must be weighed against facts set forth by the optimistic school. For writers of recent books and magazine articles are insisting that the picture painted by the neo-Malthusians is too dark. While hoping that they are right, the present writer is unconvinced; yet he is hospitable to the reception of fresh data that may lighten the picture. Meanwhile he is determined

to use his influence in the twofold direction of population control and conservation of natural resources. When Vogt says that every man must become an ecologist, he calls for a large order; but surely every preacher, educator, and serious writer can become a student of ecology and try to make ecologists of others. Largely this is a matter of adult education, but there is no reason why the study of population control and environment should not be made available to young people in public high schools, colleges, and universities. People must be taught to reorient themselves with relation to the world in which they live. They must learn to interpret the day's news in terms of man's subsistence. They must come to understand our history in terms of the soil and water and forests and grasses that made America what it once was. They must be led to see the years to come in a framework that makes space and time one. They must be helped to see that, like Antaeus, man either draws strength from the earth or perishes.

We are challenged also to take a realistic (but not, I hope, unchristian) attitude toward scientifically approved and urged measures such as (1) uniform marriage and divorce laws, (2) intelligent birth control, (3) sterilization of certain men and women. With regard to the first item, few Christians will dissent. The need for uniform laws governing marriage and divorce is generally felt, and only the inertia that hampers political change needs overcoming. But in the matter of birth control by scientific means we face, on the one hand, the fanatical opposition of the Roman Catholic hierarchy (but teaching birth control by the dubious "rhythm" method) and, on the other hand, a Protestant and Jewish popular sentimentality in favor of large families. Both positions need to be critically examined and supplanted, where possible, by a positive program of planned parenthood. As for sterilization, there is, of course, some danger that this important control may be abused and that persons on the border line of criminality or idiocy may be unjustly sterilized. But scientific and humane safeguards can be set up and preserved; and Iceland's example in promoting *voluntary* sterilization might well be copied in other lands.

Thirdly, because a study of ecology indicates that unrestrained free enterprise has well-nigh ruined our natural environment and depleted our heritage of natural resources, people should be faced with the facts in the situation. Just what are our mammoth corporations doing to our common resources of soil, forest, grasslands, wild life, and water table? Can their ruthless assaults upon our common natural heritage be stopped

by public prosecution? The great monopolies will be the death of us yet if we do not curb them.

Finally, while we can expect no economic system, as such, to solve the problem of depleted natural resources, we can lead young people and adults to inquire into the possibility of a larger measure of social ownership and control of industry, especially where it impinges upon our natural environment. (This is not to suggest that agriculture should be socially controlled except to discourage large-scale farming and absentee ownership.) Democratic socialism will not solve the ecological problem—and there are always risks involved in adopting a governmental or bureaucratic control of material resources and technology—but it may set the stage for a hopeful grapple with it. Can we progressively achieve a larger measure of social ownership and control—democratic socialism in essence—and not lose the freedom made possible by a system of free enterprise? The answer to that question is not simple. There are very real dangers connected with a system of social ownership under democratic controls. And surely we must not surrender the freedoms associated with the free enterprise the monopolists actually despise, and the Communists ridicule. What we need, it seems to the writer, is a mixed economy in which small business and farming are conducted as free enterprises, curbed as little as possible by government, and in which the people own and/or control vast forests, some of our grasslands, and the larger manufacturing and distributing industries. To some extent we have a mixed economy now; but still further socialization needs to be accomplished in order to safeguard our fund of natural resources from predatory, monopolistic enterprisers. In all this we must move carefully, clearheadedly, and scientifically, as true ecologists, and always with a zeal for God's kingdom on earth and his standards of righteousness.

# The Theological Pendulum

WAYMON PARSONS

IN 1932 A VOLUME called *Contemporary American Theology* was edited by Vergilius Ferm. In his introduction, the editor made a passing reference to a small cloud in the theological sky by writing: "An interesting conservative movement which has touched only isolated spots in America is the German Barthian theology. . . . Strange as it may seem, there has been no vogue of Barthianism in America."

Then the editor passed on to a description of the healthy state of theology in this country, citing as evidence the following factors that characterized the current theological development:

The Aristotelian God with all its absolute characteristics is being toned down and doctrines of a finite God are boldly proclaimed. . . . The relationship between sin and guilt is being worked out on principles that do not offend the ethical sense or ignore the best psychological knowledge. Harsh notes concerning a future life have been softened. The conception of the Kingdom of God has taken on a marked humanistic and optimistic emphasis in place of the former catastrophic and pessimistic notes. In general, a much larger place is given to the hopeful possibilities of human personality, individual and social, than in the older Protestant dogmatics.<sup>1</sup>

In the same volume, Prof. Albert Knudson gave as his judgment: "The authoritarian type of theology belongs to the past. I see no possibility of it ever becoming a vital belief again, not even in the sublimated form in which Karl Barth and Emil Brunner are seeking to revive it."<sup>2</sup>

All of this was quite apparent at that time. It was during my college days and I well remember our loyalty to such ideas, our excessive trust in science and co-operative human endeavor, and our effort to adjust our theological concepts to meet the intellectual requirements of the modern mind. But theological development rather ignored all these prophecies of our theologians and by the time of my last days in the Divinity School, four years later, Walter Marshall Horton was concluding his volume,

<sup>1</sup> V. Ferm, *Contemporary American Theology*. Round Table Press, 1932, pp. xii, xiii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 226.

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*Contemporary English Theology*, with these words: "I believe that American theology stands today at the crossroads; and very grave issues hang upon our decision whether to take the turn indicated by the Barthian signpost, or to follow the road on which contemporary English theology is travelling."<sup>3</sup> (The latter, as he described it in his book, was a more comprehensive position, embodying both the truth of Modernism and the best points of Continental theology.)

Where we have gone from the crossroads offered by Horton in 1936 is not too difficult for us to see now. The gradually changing point of view was quite discernable by 1939 when the *Christian Century* published articles by thirty-two representative American religious leaders on the theme, "How My Mind Has Changed." For the great majority, moralistic and philosophical orientation was giving way to a more theological orientation. There seems to be sufficient evidence that the theological pendulum has made its full swing by now. Seventeen years ago Barth's influence may have touched America only in isolated spots. Today, however, varying interpretations of his position have resulted in a movement of major concern in American theology. The most vigorous theologians of our day, occupying chairs in our leading seminaries, are advocates of a neo-orthodox theology which stems in whole or in part from the dialectical theology of Europe. The younger men who have been coming out of our seminaries in the last ten years have a theology that is in marked contrast to the theology of most graduates of twenty or twenty-five years ago. It is difficult to find a current book on theology that does not defend the position of neo-orthodoxy. And the top place of Barth and Brunner in the theological world today is evident wherever ministers gather, whether at Amsterdam or the local ministerial association.

It is not easy for those trained in the liberal tradition to have too much sympathy or appreciation for the basic position of neo-orthodoxy. But there is the demand upon us that we re-examine our own positions in the light of what it is saying, else we may find ourselves holding to a position that has become static and crystallized—the very charge that is most often made against the dialectical theologies. We must not be blind to its values on the one hand nor blind to its possible dangers on the other. Most of all, we must not dismiss it with an oversimplified explanation. It is wrong, for example, to say that it is a mere return to fundamentalism, or that it is a mere reaction against liberalism. Either is a rather superficial

<sup>3</sup> W. M. Horton, *Contemporary English Theology: an American Interpretation*. Harper & Brothers, 1936, p. 172.



judgment. It might appear that the pendulum which had swung away from fundamentalism to modernism was merely swinging back again to the same old position, a return to what was before. But this is not true. Our pendulum, for the sake of the development of this paper, is one that does not swing in a controlled arc. If something touches it at the top of its swing on the one side, it may cross the same middle ground on its way back, but its path is so changed that it ends at a different point at the top of its swing on the other side. The swing away from liberalism is not back to the same point we had before liberalism. The pendulum carries with it some of the values of liberalism and so arrives at a different position on the other side. The differences between fundamentalism and neo-orthodoxy may be accounted for in large measure by the very fact that much of the neo-orthodox position could not have emerged before the appearance of some of the contributions that were made by liberalism.

There is no question but that the dialectical theology became a voice of protest against what was considered the ineffectiveness of liberalism. Specifically it opposed its unrealistic view of human nature and society, its optimistic evolutionary faith in the basic soundness of man and the Spencerian idea of inevitable progress, its undue confidence in human reason, its emphasis on subjective experience, and its naturalistic theism. It was felt that modernism, in an effort to get rid of antiquated theological views and ecclesiastical customs, had gone so far as to give up the very essence of the Christian faith. Many of the younger converts to neo-orthodoxy have become so only because it seemed to offer them the only way to keep the faith and be loyal to the religious concept of the gospel. As Pauck has expressed it, "they feel that it is after all better to have a vital faith in outworn clothing and make-up than to be dressed in the most recent apparel, accredited by fashion, but have hardly any faith left."<sup>4</sup>

At this point it must be admitted that much of the reaction against liberalism in recent years has been a reaction against its conclusions rather than its method of approach. Liberals have been quick to point out that this is not a proper way of judging liberalism. They have insisted that it is a method rather than a creed, that it is not a theological position, but simply an attitude or spirit of approach and must be so judged. But perhaps part of the weakness of liberalism has been at this very point—that it *is* more interested in method than in conclusions. Convictions are necessary to a vital religion, and the tentative character of the conclusions

<sup>4</sup> W. Pauck, *Karl Barth: Prophet of a New Christianity?* Harper & Brothers, 1931, p. 23.

of liberalism, the holding of belief in suspension because more light may come—what Niebuhr calls “a preoccupation with intellectual adjustments”—this relative, conditional, uncertain character of liberalism is the very attribute that makes it seem inadequate in a world that can’t afford such a luxury.

In an effort to be fair in our appraisal of the neo-orthodox theology, let us examine some of its characteristic views, being willing to recognize whatever values it may possess and being equally determined not to be blind to any of its dangers.

### I

Since modern man is most repelled by the low estimate of man that is taken by the dialectical theologians, let us start with their doctrine at this point. They believe in the total depravity of man. They hold that the divine image in man was totally obliterated by the Fall. It is only when man fully realizes his hopeless and helpless situation that he is in position to make the proper response to God. They accuse modern Christianity of being both unbiblical and unrealistic in its belief in the hopeful possibilities of human nature.

In recent years I have been exposed to both sides of this issue in visits to the Pastors’ Conferences at Union Theological Seminary and Chicago Theological Seminary in alternate summers. One summer I happened to take in both sessions, the one following directly upon the other. The resulting tension was almost more than I could manage. The aggressive neo-orthodoxy of Union and the defensive liberalism at Chicago left me puzzled as to the exact status of my nature. I left Union certain that I was a worm. I came away from Chicago convinced that I was an angel. For months thereafter I was alternately a worm and an angel, but the double life was most disconcerting and I finally came to the conclusion that I was neither. I was something of both. Each school had given me a one-sided diagnosis.

The lecturers at Union seemed to be infected by a sort of creature-despising attitude—what the Greeks called *misanthropy*. The lecturers at Chicago exhibited what almost amounted to creature-worship—what the Greeks called *hubris*. And one who had to preach every Sunday found it difficult not to feel that preaching was vitiated by either position. The one leaves listeners asking, “What’s the use?” and gives them too good an excuse for their failure. The other makes them feel complacent, self-righteous, and without the need of God’s grace. Dr. Barnett Blakemore

of Chicago, in a paper on "Sin," regretted a threefold influence that neo-orthodoxy had had on present-day religion. "It has become *serious*; it has adopted a motif of *repentance*, and talks a great deal about the *moral law*." He might well have been opposed to making sin the dominating concept of Christianity, but we can welcome enough stress on it to produce these results! Too little preaching has been that effective. Without these three items, the message of the church is hardly adequate to the desperate needs of modern society. L. J. Sharp once gave this description of a certain minister's preaching: "My dear friends, you must repent—as it were; and be converted—in a measure; or you will be damned—to a certain extent."

One is led to feel that both views are unreal. Man is neither a devil nor a saint. Phillips Brooks was nearer the truth when he said that "Man is not a child of the devil whom God is trying to steal, but a son of God on whom the devil has laid his hands." Every pastor and his congregation can honestly say together, "We have done those things which we ought not to have done, and left undone those things which we ought to have done." But is there need to go on to the untrue and therefore insincere phrase, "and there is no health in us"? If we believe at all in any residual goodness of human nature we can hardly say with Isaiah, "all our righteousness is as filthy rags," but we need not fool ourselves by saying that all our filthy rags are to be accounted as righteousness. Was not Tennyson nearer the truth when he had King Arthur say to the Knights of the Round Table:

For good ye are and bad, and like to coins,  
Some true, some light, but everyone of you  
Stamped with the image of the King.

Without accepting the necessity for a doctrine of total depravity we can thank neo-orthodoxy for a restored emphasis today upon the limitations of man and his need for recognizing his sinfulness. Self-sufficiency is always in need of deflation. The sense of inadequacy can easily be the sign of the working in man of a better vision of the truth, for as Thomas Hardy has reminded us, "If way to the better there be, it exacts a full view of the worst." To the extent, then, that liberalism blinded man to the real drag that is in his nature, it became nonorthodox, with the result that at the very time when we most needed a sober and modest estimate of ourselves, we became enamored of our own power and significance. And yet, to the extent that neo-orthodoxy blinds man to the divine image that is still his birthright, it also becomes nonorthodox, with the result that at a

time when we most need courage and confidence, we are asked to surrender our faith in man's potentialities and responsibilities.

## II

Another point at which it is difficult to go all the way with neo-orthodox theologians is in their total lack of concern for the historical Jesus. We can admit that great damage has been done to the Christian faith by developments that became one-sided in their sole dependence upon the historical Jesus for the revelation of God. But to dismiss "Jesus" entirely for the "Christ of faith" and find in the latter the only revelation of God to man seems to me to correct one extreme by going to the other extreme.

It is interesting to note that the neo-orthodox attack upon this whole development of historical theology makes good use of the findings of Schweitzer and the later school of Form Criticism known as *Formgeschichte*. They lean heavily upon such scholars as Rudolf Bultmann and Martin Dibelius, and are happy to find substantiation for their theological position in the claim of the form critics that it is impossible from the Gospel sources to gain much substantial knowledge of the career and personality of Jesus, that the Gospels were not written for any such biographical or historical purpose but only in the interests of Christian faith which has nothing to do with the modern desire to reconstruct the Jesus of history. That the result of this type of form criticism may well be a thoroughgoing skepticism instead of faith does not bother the continental theologians. They use this radical school of historical criticism as far as their own purposes are served and then part company with them in the final formulation of their own theology.

But what shall we say to both these parties who are so willing to dismiss the historical Jesus? We ought to admit that much of the criticism of the "Jesus of history" movement is deserved. The Jesus of history is not enough. The so-called "rediscovery" of Jesus during the ascendancy of that school of thought led to a sentimental Jesus worship—almost a "Jesus cult"—where the following of the Man of Nazareth became a substitute for Christianity. Moreover, the Jesus of history too often became a projection into the first century of the particular predilections and ideals of the twentieth-century biographer. Christology was found to be unnecessary and the relationship of Jesus to God, when it was considered at all, usually found Jesus winning out over God.

But having said this, we cannot go on to say with the neo-orthodox

theologians that we can dispense altogether with the Jesus of history, that he was not a revealer but a concealer of God, and that his life and teachings are actually irrelevant to the Christian faith which is found only in the Resurrection and the forty days that followed. Here again it would seem that the truth must take in both positions. We cannot see how any dogma concerning the fact of God becoming man can be held by a believer completely apart from the historical life of Jesus. If his life and ministry and teachings are not allowed as evidence by which we come to believe in the incarnation, then this article of Christian faith, or any other for that matter, ceases to have any meaning. Indeed one wonders why the human life of Jesus was at all necessary. Barth, of course, says that the human life of Jesus was not necessary and makes a complete distinction between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith. But this rules out completely any reasonable view of the Word made flesh. As Prof. D. M. Baillie has argued: "If revelation is by the Word alone, then Christ lived for nothing, and the Word was made flesh in vain."<sup>5</sup>

In spite of the desire of the crisis theologians to by-pass the Jesus of history in their effort to eliminate entirely the relativity of history in their concept of God's revelation, can we be robbed of Jesus so easily? Even though we grant the full necessity for a Christology, it is difficult to see how we can escape making use of the Jesus of history in arriving at any concept of the Christ of faith. As Dr. E. F. Scott claims in his recent book, *The Purpose of the Gospels*, "the Christian religion is distinguished from all others in resting upon a history. The truth it teaches and the demands it makes on us cannot be separated from things which once happened."<sup>6</sup> In my simple way of looking at it I keep wondering how Jesus would fare if he were examined today by the proponents of this anti-historical theology. I found one answer in a recent column written by Halford Luccock. He said that Jesus would be lucky to get a C plus, and offered this delicious bit of verse to illustrate his point, a verse written by some Shakespeare scholar after reading Bradley's *Commentaries on Shakespeare*:

I dreamed that William Shakespeare's ghost  
Sat for a civil service post.  
The English paper for that year  
Was on the subject of King Lear  
William answered rather badly—  
You see he hadn't read his Bradley.

<sup>5</sup> D. M. Baillie, *God Was in Christ*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948, p. 54.

<sup>6</sup> E. F. Scott, *The Purpose of the Gospels*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949, p. 12.



## III

A third characteristic of the theology we have been considering, and one which is most irritating to those who consider themselves liberals, is its complete distrust of reason. Reason is not to be trusted. In the writings of these theologians the word is seldom found alone—it is almost invariably coupled with the adjective "faithless." Reason may be used, but we should never expect it to lead us to truth.

One might say immediately that these theologians are caught in a contradiction in their own words against reason. They are faced with the task of making their own position intelligible to others. In spite of their profound distrust of reason, they must use it to explain their theological position. As a matter of fact they must use reason in order to show why they distrust reason. Brunner answers this in a fashion by simply saying that we may use reason so long as it doesn't take the place of faith, but that we use it only that it may carry us to the ultimate contradiction. It is actually useful in this sense, for if followed to exhaustion it proves that God must always be a paradox to human reason, and it is only when man is brought face to face with this ultimate contradiction that the need for revelation becomes apparent to him.

At this point I would like to insert a mild protest against something that continually bothers me in reading neo-orthodox theology. It is the wholesale use of the "paradox" concept. It is not difficult to see that life and religion and theology produce many contradictions and baffling blind alleys. But on the whole we have been content to let a mystery remain a mystery and see some place for mystery in the total scheme of things. Now, however, there seems to be a tendency on the part of theologians to be highly pleased when any set of problems can be reduced to a paradox. It is well enough to realize that truth can often be arrived at by a dialectical process wherein we draw off an insight of value from the tension between opposites. But the contemporary fad of taking refuge in paradoxes and seeing in them a method of exalting religious truth strikes one as rather paralyzing, if it doesn't actually make an idol out of a stalemate.

But what shall we say about the despising of human reason as expressed by these theologians? Here again, it seems, we can honestly thank them for a needed reminder and then refuse to go all the way with them. A corrective was needed for the excessive rationalism that had taken over much of modern Christianity—a process that began as far back as the Enlightenment and proceeded almost unchecked until the



advent of the neo-orthodox movement. But one does not have to hold to such a dogmatic rationalism, with its religious faith in reason, in order to make the proper use of reason and see its proper relationship to faith. And this is really our rightful task—to work out anew and continually the ancient problem of the relationship of reason and revelation.

It is helpful, in a way, to remind ourselves that the undue emphasis put upon reason by the various forms of liberalism and the extreme reaction to this emphasis as represented by the neo-orthodox position is not at all a new battle in theology. Throughout the history of Christianity there have been those who overemphasized either reason or revelation—sometimes to the complete exclusion of the other. Yet neither extreme has held for long as the traditional or classical view of the Christian faith. Tertullian has long passages in which he vehemently rejects reason and blasts the Greek philosophers as the patriarchs of the heretics. St. Bernard of Clairvaux wrote that reason and speculation were deceitful and led one away from God. Luther often called reason an “evil beast” and claimed that he was out to slay the beast and offer it up as an acceptable sacrifice to God. On the other hand there have been those who have felt that reason could well discover by itself all the truths that are given to man by revelation. Abelard once declared that even Plato taught Christian truth and that some of his writings were clearly the result of the Holy Spirit working within him—to which St. Bernard replied that Abelard had only proved himself to be a heathen rather than Plato a Christian.

But doesn't the truth of the matter require something of both sides, held together in a proper relationship of the one to the other? Reason and revelation serve complimentary functions and man cannot understand religious truth without the operation of both. Using either to the exclusion of the other is always dangerous. Reason, by itself, cannot discover the truth about God and human destiny. It must be guided by revelation. Otherwise self-interest is too likely to become the source of our reason and man's rationalizations are too easily mistaken for reason. It is faith which supplies the clues or categories of interpretation by which alone the data of religion is rightly understood. Augustine argued that faith is the lamp of reason and often defended the proposition that a man must believe in order to understand. But reason is that capacity within us, which with the aid of faith, recognizes the truth when it comes to us. It is God's “point of connection” with us. Thus they are both necessarily bound up together and neither can be fruitful without the other.

## IV

There is one other point at which we must be severely critical of the neo-orthodox position in theology. It is the danger that such a position may lead us into a dogmatic authoritarianism not unlike that which characterized fundamentalism at its worst. The fatal mistake of all such systems of authoritarianism is to equate Christian faith with the believing of certain propositions—the intellectual acceptance of dogmas and creeds—and to expect the fruits of religion through the mere process of indoctrination.

In fairness, I repeat that there is simply the *danger* of the neo-orthodox position leading to such a system, for if I understand them correctly, few, if any of these theologians admit that this is implicit in their view and state very emphatically that it ought not to be. They insist that revelation is not a disclosure of propositions about God, but an actual "divine-human encounter" to which man responds with living faith. Brunner, in his book by this title, deals most pointedly with this difference between genuinely Christian or biblical faith and the mere acceptance of dogma. "Orthodoxy," he writes, "thought of God as the teacher who delivered supernatural, revealed truth and proffered faith to man. In this way the Word of God was identified with doctrine, and faith was assent to this doctrine. . . . For this reason the faith of Orthodoxy was so destitute of love. For love cannot be created by faith in a revealed truth, but only by the presence in the heart of the Holy Spirit, who is none other than the very love of God, himself, poured out in our hearts."<sup>7</sup> That Brunner has no defense for the kind of faith that becomes crystallized in dogma is indicated by this vivid statement in the same book: "The age of Orthodoxy appears like a frozen waterfall—mighty shapes of movement but no movement."<sup>8</sup>

It is rather clear that the leaders of this theology wish to avoid the static consequences of an authoritarian dogmatism. The question, however, is whether or not this is possible when their theology presupposes a type of church which would necessarily have to be authoritarian in its teaching. Barth, for instance, yearns for a church which will say clearly: "In so far as we have the right to speak, such and such is dogma *in concretissimo*." Perhaps he meant that such pronouncement of dogma would only be by way of testimony rather than as a binding requirement upon the believer, but the line between becomes rather vague in actual practice.

Yet this distinction is all-important. One can see a great need for

<sup>7</sup> E. Brunner, *The Divine-Human Encounter*. London, S. C. M. Press, 1944, p. 73.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

a wider use of doctrine in the matter of testimony. It is all to the good that the International Council of Religious Education has now called upon a group of theologians to counsel with it on matters of basic policy and content in education. There is a necessity for testifying to the faith which is found in the Christian community. But this testimony *to* the faith is *not the faith* and must never be equated with it. "Faith, hope and love," as Roger Shinn has written, "are not indoctrinated; they are evoked."<sup>9</sup> To make doctrine authoritarian, and faith the assent to this doctrine, is to turn what ought to be testimony into a test of faith.

In spite of the fact that the fathers of the neo-orthodox theology did not intend this to occur, it has become one of the consistent characteristics of many who follow this theology. Especially is this true of the younger ministers who have turned to continental theology in their reaction against what they consider an unrealistic liberalism. It would seem that too many of them have exposed themselves to this theology and come away with the husk instead of the kernel. They have become convinced that the uniquely Christian, biblical faith is contained in dogmas which are authoritarian and must be made binding on the believer. Some of them, like a Baptist who turns Episcopalian and immediately goes overboard on the matter of form and ritual, outdo the Catholics in their advocacy of a dogmatic authoritarianism. It seems ironic that their theology should thus take on Brunner's devastating description of Orthodoxy—"like a frozen waterfall—mighty shapes of movement, but no movement."

## V

One final word ought to be said about the most recent signs of a returning swing of the theological pendulum. At present there are indications that the swing toward neo-orthodoxy has come to a halt and the movement away from it has begun. One small piece of evidence is the widespread attention that is being given to Bishop Gustaf Aulén's works. Aulén is a Scandinavian theologian who stands in a middle position between Continental neo-orthodoxy and Anglo-Saxon liberalism, being critical of both these schools. If his influence continues to grow it is certain to have a modifying influence upon neo-orthodoxy.

But perhaps an even better indication of the swing away from radical neo-orthodoxy, at least in this country, is the recent change of attitude on the part of Reinhold Niebuhr. His recent writings reveal a growing disappointment with Continental theology as far as its influence on the

<sup>9</sup> R. Shinn in *The Christian Century*, January 5, 1949, p. 13.

churches in Europe is concerned. Since the war he believes that European churches and churchmen have reverted to a blind fundamentalism and religious fatalism. "Its literalism," he writes, "seems to give the Christians who have always belonged to the Christian community a new sense of security. But it is an affront to those who are seeking for truth in Christianity for the first time."<sup>10</sup> In his answer to Barth's Amsterdam address he pays tribute to what Barth's interpretation of the Christian faith had done for people in their fight against tyranny. "But perhaps this theology is constructed too much for the great crisis of history," he adds. "It seems to have no guidance for a Christian statesman for our day." The entire article suggests that Niebuhr believes the crisis theology has gone to seed. He closes with this most significant confession: "We are embarrassed about our correction because we cannot deny that this Continental theology outlines the final pinnacle of the Christian faith and hope with fidelity to the Scriptures. Yet it requires correction. It started its theological assault with the reminder that we are men and not God. The wheel has come full circle. It is now in danger of offering a crown without a cross, a faith which has annulled rather than transmuted perplexity."<sup>11</sup>

So, it would appear that the pendulum is now beginning its return trip. If this is true, what has been so before will again be so—that is, it will not return unaffected by what has touched it at the top of the arc this time. If the theological development ahead should find a ground somewhere between the extremes of an overly pessimistic neo-orthodoxy and an overly optimistic liberalism, I cannot say that I would be disappointed. Perhaps this is much too pat a theological position, but from the long perspective of the history of Christian apologetics, as the pendulum has swung first in one direction and then in the other, it has certainly been at this point more often than at any other. Of course the pendulum will not stay put for long at any point, nor should it. But whatever directions its outward swings may take, it will return again and again in the future as it has in the past, to that reasonable and vital core of traditional Christian faith that has been so often the point of departure and the point of return. That point itself changes, of course, becoming richer and more meaningful with enduring the traffic of so much theological journeying. But in some respects at least it might be called the rightful theological home of each one of us whatever his theology may be.

<sup>10</sup> R. Niebuhr, "The Religious Life of Europe." Religious News Service, Dec., 1948.

<sup>11</sup> R. Niebuhr in *The Christian Century*, Oct. 27, 1948, p. 1140.

# Stained Glass and the Church

HENRY LEE WILLET

THE DAWN OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA found the fine arts well developed. The known world was filled with outstanding architectural examples, fine sculpture; even painting had advanced from the crude cave paintings of the Stone Age through Egyptian wall paintings to the lifelike portrayals of the Hellenistic period and so on to the ornate frescoes of Pompeii. It was left for the Christian church to bring into being and develop that perishable yet most enduring form of art in color, stained glass—the only art, in fact, to be entirely developed by Christianity after its emergence into the light from the catacombs of Rome.

The churches and basilicas of the third and fourth centuries had small pierced window-openings in which chips of colored glass were set in plaster or wood, to give the effect of sparkling jewels, but it was not until the tenth century that there is any record of stained glass as we know it today. Windows made of pieces of colored glass with lines forming designs and figures painted on with a mineral pigment fused permanently into the glass surface are on record in the Cathedral of Rheims in France from A.D. 969. There also exists a tenth-century record of a fire in the town of Fleury-sur-Loire, expressing fear that the fire might melt the lead in the church windows. However, the earliest existing examples of stained glass are a group of small windows called the Prophets in the Cathedral in Augsburg, Germany, which date from the eleventh century.

We know that by the twelfth century, stained-glass windows were being made in large numbers and with such consummate skill that we must assume a long experience in the complicated processes of the craft. The monk Theophilus, who lived during the second half of this century, wrote the oldest document we possess on the fabrication of stained-glass windows. His Latin treatise indicates a long practice of the art of translucent painting, which is generally conceded to have reached its highest point of development in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, notably in the Cathedral of Chartres.

The finest windows excite the senses with their ministry of color,

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but are also capable of inspiring reverence and awe in all who will take the time to look closer and absorb the great Christian truths portrayed in the fine detail of their symbolic stories. Their teaching value is limited only by the zeal of the one who studies them. Thus, while their glorious living color may inspire a certain degree of interest in even the most casual beholder, there is almost no end to the soul-stirring poignant appeal they may arouse in a sincere, consecrated beholder possessing the highest of human instincts and emotions.

A window should be inspiring, not simply exciting; liturgical, not just theater. However, the art of stained glass has definite limitations, just as the humans who work in it and those who behold it do. Whenever stained glass has been designed and executed within the bounds of its limitations, we have had a golden era in stained glass, such as was enjoyed during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and such as we are experiencing today in the work of the best craftsmen in our own country.

To what can we attribute the unsurpassed beauty of the finest examples of this great Christian art? The most important characteristic or limitation of fine stained glass, of which the medieval craftsmen never lost sight, was the fact that stained glass is not an independent art, but is the handmaid of architecture. A window is a decorated translucent section of wall, without linear or aerial perspective. The medieval windows were always two-dimensional, never violating the precepts of a flat surface by introducing modeling or perspective. Secondly, the early craftsmen were completely aware that they were working with active light and that light passing through translucent bits of colored glass has properties to awaken inspiring thoughts in men's souls. Finally, these craftsmen, who worked in the very shadow of the shrines they were bedecking with jeweled windows, were men of intense religious fervor, men who had survived persecution, many of whom had returned from the crusades and who had a story to tell. They told it with rare simplicity of design and great beauty of color.

The glory of glass is the glass itself. This should seem self-evident, but after the great Gothic and transitional periods degrading forces set to work.

War, famine, and uprisings have taken their toll on stained glass. In the early centuries war losses were caused to a great extent by the plundering and looting of victorious armies. Today, if one would see the original glass from Sainte Chapelle in Paris, one must visit the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Thus, windows and fragments of panels



from many of the medieval cathedrals and churches are to be found today in galleries and private collections in all parts of the world.

In World War I much beautiful stained glass was destroyed, including that in the Cathedral of Amiens, and also the Cathedral of Rheims where a bombardment of 30,000 shells reduced its jeweled splendor to rubble. However, Jacques Simon was able to reconstruct the lost designs, using the drawings of the windows made by his ancestors who had been artists in glass since 1640. Cleverly combining the jumbled piles of broken bits salvaged by the townspeople between barrages with newly made glass of emerald green, rich yellow, celestial blue and other colors, Mr. Simon was so successful in his results that even he found it difficult to distinguish between original and reconstruction when the windows were put back in place.

Serious losses were not so extensive during the recent war, when stained glass was one of the first things to go underground, and thus the priceless treasures of Chartres and of many fine English churches were preserved. The medieval glass of Lincoln Cathedral, buried in a chamber at the bottom of a sixty-foot shaft, was replaced as soon as the last V-bomb had rocketed over England, and the matchless glass of Canterbury, Yorkminster, and King's College Chapel, Cambridge, is even now being replaced. Some windows, of course, were destroyed, as at St. Andrews, Holburn, Dibden (near Southampton), Basingstoke, Clyst St. George (near Exeter), and the only remaining figure from the glass in Henry VII's chapel in Westminster Abbey. Much of the fifteenth-century and later glass in Westminster Abbey, which was damaged by bombs, is being successfully repaired at the present time, as is similar damage at St. Paul's Cathedral. A number of friendly gestures were made by United States troops who, on leaving Britain, gave windows to churches where they worshiped during their stay. One such window, in a twelfth-century church in Norfolk, given by the 96th Bomber Squadron, shows an American airman looking up to the figure of Christ, while below is the spire of the church over which the airmen passed on their bombing missions. Another window in another village portrays the signing of the Atlantic Charter by President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill on the deck of the battleship *Prince of Wales*.

Cruel as the war damage is, the two most destructive influences on stained glass have come from within, and the lesser of these evils has been the church itself, which at various times has turned against its child like a colossal Medea. In the twelfth century the Cistercians revolted

against what they considered overextravagance of color and figure work. Several statutes were passed forbidding any type of windows except those made of white glass without crosses or figures. And the Edict of 1159, stating that "windows made of colored glass before such were prohibited must be removed within three years," was intended to put the quietus on jeweled windows once and for all. In the fourteenth century the Franciscans also placed a ban on figure windows. And finally the Puritans, with great religious fervor, went about destroying windows in many of the fine churches and cathedrals of England, notably Winchester, where today the great multilancet window in the façade contains glass made of the broken pieces left after Cromwell's men had completed ravaging the windows.

Much as we deplore the highhanded tactics of the early monks and the cruel damage done by the Roundheads, nevertheless the greatest destructive influence on good stained glass has been the workers themselves, who in the sixteenth century began to abandon their ideals of rich coloring and simple treatment. Windows lost their charm and integrity when the artists who were working in the medium of glass forgot that beauty was the result of light passing through glasses of varying thicknesses, and so covered each piece of glass with elaborate patterns of paint that its vibrancy was destroyed. They also tried to arrange it in forms and patterns for which it was ill adapted, aping canvases of naturalistic figures and landscapes filled with perspective which caused distortion of the wall surface. Thus both the decorative and liturgical value of the glass was lost.

This trend continued in England for several centuries, during which time little glass work of merit or interest was carried out. It reached its lowest ebb in America in the late nineteenth century when the popular mural painter, John LaFarge, introduced the type of glass known today as opalescent. This is a milky, iridescent type of glass which, because of its opaque character, does not transmit light rays, but rather the light stops on striking the glass, which then emits a warm, soft glow. This was just the effect John LaFarge wished to produce in the interior of the churches he was decorating; and the windows he subsequently produced of this glass were not too pictorial and on the whole avoided perspective which would have violated the architectural precepts for a stained-glass window.

Unfortunately, the Tiffany Studios, intrigued with the possibilities of this glass, experimented further and developed the opalescent into what they later called favrile glass. This is sometimes referred to as drapery glass because it was so molded into folds that by careful selection it could

be used to simulate the gowns in figures as well as certain effects of the terrain in naturalistic landscapes. But the material used was the least of the evils of this school, exponents of which went the craftsmen of the sixteenth century one worse, having no sensibility whatever to architectural feeling. Not content to carry subjects and figures through the stone mullions, they frequently tore out the mullions, the lacelike traceries, and even parts of the wall itself in their desire for large unobstructed surfaces. Symbolism and mysticism were thrown overboard, angels became earthy, receding landscapes and exact reproductions of the religious paintings of Holman Hunt and Hoffman were the order of the day. The uncultured and uninitiated, not thinking of the window as a part of the architecture, were delighted with the sweet feminine appeal of these pictures on glass, and were easily persuaded that this was the proper type of window. Were not the paintings from which these windows were copied works of art? Therefore, the windows must be works of art.

The Tiffany Studios set a high standard of workmanship and produced windows which were, of their kind, matchless. The opalescent school had strong sentimental appeal and enjoyed a tremendous vogue, but subsequent craftsmen produced windows of vastly inferior workmanship. Their product bore no resemblance whatever, either in conception or method, to the work of the great medieval period. Quite forgotten was the fact that you cannot translate an easel picture into glass and lead any more than you can, in the words of Ralph Adams Cram, "play the Venus of Milo on a string quartet."

Today we are enjoying another golden era of glass, a rebirth or resurgence of the best in stained glass, brought about by the faith and purpose of a few pioneers who, at the turn of the century, had the courage to follow William Willet in his struggle to bring about a return to the great fundamental principles of the early glass workers. William Willet was considered a young visionary when, standing enthralled before the windows of Chartres, he said, "If America was given sufficient time, opportunity and stimulus, she could create something quite as beautiful as this symphony of color." He spent his life attempting to prove this, and lived to place the first medallion windows in this country in the First Presbyterian Church and in Calvary Episcopal Church, both in Pittsburgh. He also won another victory in the battle for true stained glass in this country when, in 1910, his was the winning design in an international competition, and he was selected to make the windows for the great new chapel of the United States Military Academy at West Point. Every year

since, in uninterrupted succession, the studio that bears his name has placed windows in this chapel, the longest consecutive commission in the history of American stained glass. Thanks to the fine groundwork laid by William Willet and a few other inspired craftsmen, the finest stained glass in the world is being made today in the United States.

At some time during his ministry, practically every clergyman is faced with the question of stained glass, and it behooves him to have at least a bowing acquaintance with the fundamentals of this art. He should realize that stained glass plays an important role not only in the artistic edification of the congregation, a fact which is being more and more appreciated by the younger generation, but in its religious education as well. He should be happy in the thought that today, with proper foresight and the co-operation of the architect and stained-glass artist, an iconographic scheme for the windows in his church can be worked out that will give a fenestration of stained glass that will be a source of inspiration and joy to everyone in his congregation and to those of succeeding generations. Thus his lovely church need never be disfigured by incongruous windows placed at random at various times entirely at the whim of individual donors.

A great fallacy believed by many vestries and building committees is that a competition, with designs and estimates furnished by a number of studios, will result in obtaining the best man for their particular stained-glass problem. The Code of Ethics of the Stained Glass Association of America states, in part, "We believe that ideal conditions will prevail when only one craftsman studies the problem with the architect and owner. This condition fosters mutual confidence as well as the most practical and economical procedure. Should this craftsman fail to satisfy the architect or owner with his sketches, he should be willing to withdraw, without compensation, thus permitting another craftsman to enjoy the full co-operation of the owner." It is practically impossible today to get top-ranking stained-glass artists to go into competition unless they are assured of compensation for the expense involved. The mere psychology of a competition engenders wrong ideas in the competitors, who feel forced to show how they can give the client more glass for less money. The winner often finds he has promised too much for too little, and is obliged to resort to short cuts.

An appealing design or sketch does not necessarily guarantee a window of similar appeal. Many times designs are submitted where the sketch has been procured from an outside, free-lance designer, or even from a designer employed by another studio but working in his free time.

Often the studio submitting such a design has neither the necessary personnel nor the proper palette to carry out a truly fine window. Instead of choice, hand-blown glasses and Norman slabs, some thin, flat, and uninteresting but cheap cathedral glasses may be substituted at one eighth the cost. What looked like many small pieces on the sketch and a use of heavy lead comes may turn out in the finished window to be lines painted on large pieces of glass, or painted lines paralleling thin lead comes to look like thick comes. A niggardly use of metal armatures and saddle bars is another short cut often used, resulting all too soon in bulging and bagging windows. In place of the costly and tedious method of biting with acids on flashed glasses where fine detailed work is necessary, some artists will use enamel colors which are easily and quickly applied, but which will inevitably deteriorate and peel off in time.

These are only a few of the pitfalls awaiting the unwary building committee. Unfortunately, there are all too few craftsmen who are experts in the various fields of designing, cartooning for stained glass, cutting, glass painting, glazing, installing, etc. The finest windows seen in the cathedrals and churches of this country are usually the product of studios where a group of highly skilled and trained craftsmen have worked together for years under the direction of a leader, producing symphonies in glass much as a great symphony orchestra produces fine music. The palette of a stained-glass studio is not something that can be acquired in the twinkling of an eye for a mere trifle. It is built up of colors from many pots of glass from the great glass-blowing houses of England, France, Milton in West Virginia, etc., and requires the most careful selection over a period of years to insure the proper range of necessary hues.

Armed with the above facts, but not forgetting the words of Pope, who said, "A little learning is a dangerous thing," and always remembering that spiritual illumination does not necessarily imply the gift of artistic judgment, the wise vestry or committee will select with the utmost care a stained glass artist in whom they feel sure they can place their confidence.

The whole future of the stained glass craft, and of architecture itself, lies in the hope that it will not be a mere copying of naïve medieval forms and patterns resulting in almost certain archaisms and affectations, but that it be expressive of the best that is in us and in our lives today, preserving only those basic and changeless qualities that are essential to all good glass. The following great statement of Viollet-le-Duc, who wrote what is considered the "stained glass Bible" (his article on "Le Vitrail" in the *Dictionnaire Raisoné de L'Architecture Française*) might easily be attrib-



uted to some outstanding contemporary architect rather than to a man who died in 1879: "If some Gothic architect could revisit this earth today with all the formulae and principles which he had used in his time, and could we acquaint him with our modern ideas, methods, and materials, he would not build in the style of the twelfth or thirteenth century, but would be true to the first law of his art, that of conforming to the needs and manners of the moment. . . . Monuments of stone or wood may perish, but that which endures is the spirit which raised these monuments. This spirit is our own, the very soul of our land."

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# Through Ecumenical Glasses

BELA VASADY

THE WORD "ECUMENICAL" still has a baffling sound in many countries, and there are yet many Christians who misunderstand or misinterpret it. I was Secretary of the Ecumenical Committee of the Churches of Hungary before my coming to the United States. On my speaking tours across the United States, however, I was frequently introduced as Secretary of the "Economical" Committee of the Churches of Hungary! There is, or course, a germ of truth even in this error and I might as well point it out. Economics as a science must not be confused with ecumenics, but ecumenicity is the best, the most unifying, the most integrating, and the most enriching economy!

Now that the World Council of Churches has been formed in 1948 at its First Assembly in Amsterdam, the question of what it means to be an "ecumenical Christian," a member of the universal church of Christ, must become a pressing concern to all of us. We must examine ever more closely just what obligations are involved in viewing and evaluating all national and international, all economic, social, cultural and political issues, but chiefly all churchly and theological problems, always *through ecumenical glasses*.

The aim of this brief article is to answer these questions in three concise statements. By way of introduction, however, let me tell you how the need for an *ecumenical perspective* took shape in my mind, until I became convinced that it was the supreme, most imperative need of our time.

## I

As a member of the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches, while it was in process of formation, I wanted to resume contact with the Committee just as soon as the war was over. Hungary being at that time under Russian occupation, I immediately applied for a Russian "exit permit." After several months of "pulling strings" the permit was

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finally granted. It was a sullen Saturday afternoon in February, 1946. I went at once to the headquarters of the American Military Mission at Budapest, Hungary's capital, where the authorities had promised to take care of my transportation to Western Europe just as soon as I secured the Russian exit permit. This being on a weekend, however, there was no one at headquarters except for the attendant on duty. Coming out, I met an American officer with whom I began to discuss my problem. As we stood there, absorbed in our conversation, a truck hit us. We were both injured. An ambulance took me to the Deaconesses' Hospital, where I was bedridden for ten days. As soon as I was barely able to walk, I left Hungary on an American military plane. The plane carried only seven passengers: six American GI's and one Hungarian professor of theology!

In five hours we arrived at Paris. From there I proceeded to Geneva, where the leaders of the World Council welcomed me like the lost sheep that was found again. I was "only" seven months late!

"What are your personal needs?" they inquired at once.

"I didn't come to talk about my personal needs," I answered, "but about the needs of the churches of Hungary and of all Central Europe."

"Of course," they persisted, "but you are going to America to speak on behalf of our relief and rehabilitation program. For that reason we have to know if you have any personal needs."

"In that case," I replied, "I can think of only one item. When that truck hit me I broke my glasses and I couldn't get another pair. For one thing, you can't buy glasses in Hungary. What's more, according to the inflationary rate of exchange, my salary was only one dollar per month so that I couldn't afford them anyway. Yes, I'll be thankful for a pair of glasses."

I got the glasses within a few hours, and because they were a gift of the World Council of Churches, known also as the *Ecumenical* Council of Churches, I have called them my "ecumenical glasses" ever since!

After this episode, I visited Switzerland, France, Belgium, Scotland, Canada, the United States, Cuba, Haiti, etc. I delivered several hundred sermons and lectures on the American continent. But whether the congregations addressed belonged to the Protestant Episcopal, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Reformed, Lutheran, Evangelical-United Brethren, Christian, or any other denomination, I enjoyed reminding them that though I was a citizen of a small central-European country, yet, by the providence of God, I was able to look at them *through ecumenical glasses*.

In other words, I learned to view and to appraise everything from the standpoint of the universal church of Jesus Christ. In jest, yet earnestly, I have been wishing but one thing for all my audiences: that, without benefit of a baleful truck, they might also be furnished with a pair of such glasses, since there will be no peace on earth until we all learn to view the problems of the world not only from a national or denominational but from an ecumenical standpoint.

## II

Through ecumenical glasses! This means, first of all, the consistent fostering and cultivation of a *one-church-consciousness*.

One of my observations concerning Americans is that they are the world's most time-conscious people. Again, during recent years, they have been growing more and more "one-world-conscious." American Christians, however, ought to take one further step, and not only they, but all Christians everywhere: they ought to recognize it as their supreme duty and privilege to become "one-church-conscious."

The ideas of "one world" and "one church" belong together organically. They are inseparable. We are not going to have one world unless we have one church. This one church can best be pictured in the unity of the "flock." Christ himself did not think in terms of the "fold," i.e., the institution, the external, visible organization and its oneness. Rather did he anticipate the oneness of the "flock," which is a oneness in spirit and in truth. *Ubi Christus, ibi Ecclesia*—"Where Christ is, there is the church." The one, ecumenical church! This is the church of which we read in the New Testament that it is the "body of Christ"—*Corpus Christi*. Its members stand in a living, organic relation, first of all with Christ, the one Head, but also with one another. This is how the communion of saints (*communio sanctorum*) comes about. To foster and cultivate the consciousness of one church is an obligation derived from our membership in the communion of saints. In this spirit, to mention here the postwar efforts of reconstruction and interchurch aid, let us be very sure not to differentiate between "aid-giving" and "aid-receiving" churches. For in the communion of saints—in the unity of the flock, in the oneness of Christ's body—there can only be one form of intercourse among the members, and that is *sharing*. The hard-hit churches of Europe and Asia as a vast fellowship of suffering, and the churches of America as a fellowship of compassion, have met in this adventure of sharing, of exchanging

material and spiritual resources for their mutual benefit as members of the body of Christ. And where such a oneness is achieved in Christ and through Christ, there Christians are bearing an eloquent witness to the reality of the holy catholic church!

It must be apparent that this one-church-consciousness is not quantitative, but qualitative; that it is the awareness not of a physical, but of a spiritual, dimension. For this reason it requires, first of all, a super-denominational attitude. To view and appraise all things through ecumenical glasses demands that we become more than *just* Presbyterians, Baptists, Episcopalians, Eastern Orthodox, or what have you. Moreover, it requires a supernational attitude, since it rejects all national isolation and self-centeredness. But we must go even further. To see everything through ecumenical glasses spells judgment for a narrow, hemispheric outlook. "In Christ there is no East or West. In Him no South or North." Christ's church, whether it be geographically East, or West, or between East and West, can never become a bridgehead but must forever remain a bridge; it can never be a rampart, but must forever assert itself as an all-embracing and all-integrating enterprise of Christ's community of faith and love. "God's Word is not bound." Looking through ecumenical glasses implies piercing through the "Iron Curtain" of secular imperialism as well as through the "Velvet Curtain" of clerical imperialism, Roman or other, in order to bear witness ever anew to our membership in that one church which is the body of Christ. The more the world threatens to split into two hostile camps, the more timely and relevant the Christian one-world outlook becomes, and the more urgently we need to foster and cultivate that one-church-consciousness which appears so clearly in this perspective.

### III

Through ecumenical glasses! By this we mean, in the second place, to live constantly in a state of *creative tension*.

Such an outlook is anything but an idle, neutral attitude. It is impossible to get to know the ecumenical church of Christ from the outside, as passive spectators. In order really to know it we must become living members, constituent elements. In order to grasp the full meaning of the "one church," our whole life must become a series of "existential responses" to Christ, a chain of decisions in the carrying out of his will. This consciousness elicits a constant tension, a total involvement of our

whole being. This tension is the result of the church's twofold aspect: the divine and the human. Even as the Reformers taught, we are members simultaneously of the visible church and the invisible church. We are members of the visible church, which on earth forever struggles against all the manifestations of human wickedness, falsehood and hypocrisy, but we are also members of the invisible church, which, however, is invisible to human eyes only, since "the Lord knoweth them that are his" (II Tim. 2:19). Between these two churches there is a uniting bond, and this conjunction becomes a reality in the souls of the "living" members. The invisible church, through this conjunction, continually judges the visible church, making it feel uneasy, inspiring it with divine dissatisfaction, urging it toward a perpetual "reformation." In other words, the invisible church, through its members, keeps the visible church in a state of tension, and this tension is creative because it originates from above, from the vertical dimension, and therefore can be understood and accounted for only through God's Word and his Holy Spirit.

To be seeing everything ecumenically presupposes, then, that I must live in a historically and geographically determined denomination and congregation. I must take part in its worship services, its prayer meetings, its Sunday-school work, its administration and its benevolences. At the same time, however, the mainspring of all my church work must be found in my own divine dissatisfaction, to wit, that *my* congregation, *my* denomination, *my* historically and geographically determined "church" is still very far from being identical with Christ's "one church"! The more deeply I experience this creative tension between "the church-as-men-have-conceived-it" and "the church-as-God-intended-it" (Visser't Hooft), the more powerfully I shall confess the new evangelical catholicity and the more irresistibly I shall seek spiritual communion with other congregations, with other denominations, with members of churches which differ from my own geographically, historically, racially or nationally; and the more diligently I shall strive for a community of prayer and work with them, that we may come to know each other's faith, each other's soul, ever more fully. In so doing, I shall become increasingly aware of the implications of being an ecumenical Christian. From the church's outward form I shall forever be striving toward its eternal, inward mystery. From a narrow view of the denomination, of the visible church, I shall be growing into the ecumenical church, whose reality can be apprehended by faith alone. From the false church I shall be making my way toward the true church!

## IV

There remains but one further requirement for the world Christian. To see everything from this catholic standpoint requires a *daily about-face* for the sake of Christ, right in that congregation and denomination in which God has called us to serve him.

To become such a Christian, you did not need to buy a round-trip ticket to Amsterdam, and you did not need to participate in the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches in person. It is contrary to the spirit of true ecumenicity to pass all responsibility over to the official representatives and leaders of the various denominations. And woe to the World Council of Churches if we allow it to become the playground of "ecumenical bureaucrats"! This outlook must be acquired by even the humblest church member both as a privilege and as a responsibility. It is a gift of God, and at the same time the mark of a new, vital commitment to him.

While traveling through the United States, I have often seen in trains this notice: "Dining Car in Opposite Direction." We might liken our world, now threatened with disruption, to a racing train, on which the churches also, with their rivalries or their indifference, are passengers. Looking through the train with our ecumenical glasses we see a similar notice as a divine warning: "Jesus Christ in Opposite Direction." For his sake, in him and through him, we must make a complete, daily about-face, if we want to meet him and to find the only possible solution to the world's ills.

"Jesus Christ in Opposite Direction!" He refuses to be a party to any individual, racial, national or denominational self-centeredness. He insists on being the Shepherd of the whole flock, the Head of the whole body. He does not identify himself with any economic or social order, for he must remain the supreme Judge over both capitalism and communism. He will not cast his lot with any one form of government, because he makes a total demand on all nations and on all their citizens, and his total demand can be met only by a total response. He does not wish to take part in political intrigues, warmongering, even in the fomenting of so-called "holy wars"; instead, he expects of us the mobilization of all our moral powers, feeding upon our total surrender to him, and rising up in the interest of a just and lasting peace. No single denomination or "church" can appropriate him. Rather, he expects the members of every church to run the risk of a complete about-face, to subject all their so-called human, economic, and social values, all their accustomed national



and international prejudices to a radical revision, until these no longer stand in the way of an absolute obedience to him, of an unconditional surrender to him as Lord and Savior.

The only guarantee of success for the Amsterdam Assembly of the World Council of Churches lies in an endless series of miniature Amsterdams taking place in congregations of various denominations all over the world while they are repeating and acting out the three main statements of the first paragraph of the Message of the Assembly: "In seeking Christ we find one another." "We have covenanted with one another." "We intend to stay together." Real and vital ecumenicity is and remains local ecumenicity. "Onward, Christian soldiers" means to work all the time on the ecumenical frontier as it runs through our own congregation, community, denomination, and nation. And to bear witness on the very spot to the all-sufficiency of "Jesus Christ as God and Savior"!

# The Epistle of Jude

ALBERT E. BARNETT

READERS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, if they consider Jude at all, wonder why the epistle was preserved and how it became a part of the New Testament. It cannot have been due to any widespread popularity in the early church, for the circulation of the epistle appears to have been geographically limited and relatively late. Verbal similarities in the doxologies of I Clem. 20:12 and 65:2 to Jude 25 (cf. Eccus. 18:5) conceivably indicate acquaintance with the letter on Clement's part, but this is not necessarily the case. Similarly, Hermas' reference to defilement of the body (Sim. V, 7:2) does not prove his acquaintance with Jude 8.

The earliest convincing instance of the impact of Jude on the church is its incorporation, around the middle of the second century, as chapter two of the Epistle of Second Peter. Toward the close of the second century, the Muratorian Canon includes Jude among the writings "accepted in the Catholic Church," but hints at differences of judgment regarding its authenticity ("The Epistle of Jude no doubt, and the two bearing the name of John, are accepted in the Catholic Church"). Tertullian and his public regarded Jude as an apostolic writing and attributed it to Jude the brother of Jesus. Tertullian climaxes his argument for the scriptural status of Enoch by the reminder that Enoch possessed "a testimony in the Apostle Jude."<sup>1</sup> Clement of Alexandria quotes the epistle as by Jude.<sup>2</sup> Origen ascribed the epistle to Jude, whom he took to be the brother of Jesus as referred to by that name in Mark 6:3 and Matt. 13:55.<sup>3</sup>

Jude, like James, "is considered spurious" by Eusebius (*Hist.* II, 23:24-25) on the ground that few of "the ancients" mentioned it (cf. *Hist.* VI, 14:1). Nevertheless he lists it among the "disputed" as distinguished from the "spurious" writings (*Hist.* II, 25:3). Athanasius lists Jude last in the corpus of seven Catholic letters included in his New Testament.<sup>4</sup> Jerome also knew Jude as one of the seven Catholic Epistles and attributed it to "Jude the brother of James." He says "it has gained authority and is reckoned among the Holy Scriptures" because of its an-

<sup>1</sup> *On the Apparel of Women* 1:3; cf. Jude 14-15.

<sup>2</sup> *Instructor* III, 8; cf. Jude 5-6. *Miscellanies* III, 2, cf. Jude 8-16.

<sup>3</sup> *Commentary on Matthew* X, 17 and XVII, 30; *First Principles* III, 2:1.

<sup>4</sup> *Festal Letter* XXXIX, 5.

tiquity and its general use in the church. He accounts for its rejection by some on the ground that it "quotes from the apocryphal book of Enoch."<sup>5</sup>

One of B. H. Streeter's significant contributions to the criticism of the Gospels was his identification of each Gospel with a locality and his further suggestion that support by an influential church contributed to preservation and subsequent canonization. This is notably probable in the case of Mark, which was so largely incorporated in Matthew and Luke and might understandably have been supplanted by them. The preservation and canonization of Jude may well have been analogous to that of Mark. Apparently it achieved a high degree of importance in the estimation of a powerful local church and its claims to continued attention were supported by that church. Not only was its status not weakened by its substantial reproduction in Second Peter but it actually took precedence over the latter in canonization.

Such data as we possess suggest Rome as the probable place of its composition. Its incorporation in Second Peter and its inclusion in the Muratorian Canon argue for its Roman origin and Tertullian's treatment of it as canonical strengthens that conclusion. Its vigorous hostility toward heretical teaching makes its author a natural forerunner of the Pastorals, the Muratorian Canon, and Irenaeus. It had apparently become so firmly established in the esteem of the Roman church as to win a place in the canon of the West ahead of the later and more elaborate epistle of Second Peter—which might have served the same essential purposes. We should like if possible to discover what it was in the epistle that fixed it so firmly in the good opinion of Roman Christianity.

The answer is that the epistle reflects a clash of two points of view in the early church. Its author vigorously espouses one and denounces the other. He appeals to orthodox Christians "to contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (v. 3) as preferable to the "dreamings" of certain "ungodly persons" who have "secretly" gained admission to the church and who "defile the flesh, reject authority, and revile the glorious ones," with the result that they "pervert the grace

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<sup>5</sup> *Illustrious Men* IV.

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of God . . . and deny our only Master and Lord" (vv. 8, 4). Irreverence for the foundations of historical Christianity is the common denominator of the charges against the errorists. Instead of the apostolic tradition, they exalt the authority of their own immediate inspiration.

English translations generally leave the reader confused about the character of the errorists. They either leave it undefined ("These men in their dreamings," ER, AR, RSV; "These dreamers," Goodspeed), or else they interpret "dreamings" to mean lasciviousness ("filthy dreamers"—A and Clem. Alex. *Strom.* iii.2.11). Thayer's lexicon supports the latter rendering by defining *enupniazo* as meaning "to be beguiled with sensual images and carried away to an impious course of conduct." This definition, however, violates the sense of the context and is not required by usage. It restricts *enupniazomenoi* to the first of a series of three affirmations ("These men . . . defile the flesh"), whereas it refers equally to the two remaining clauses ("These men . . . reject authority, and revile the glorious ones"). Defilement of the flesh, rejection of the authority of angels, contempt for angelic beings are equally explained by "their dreamings."

Moulton and Milligan's *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* defines *enupnion* and *enupniazo* as referring not simply to dreams in the ordinary sense, but to visions experienced in temples and under divine inspiration. In Acts 2:17, quoting Joel 3:1, the noun and verb are so used: "Your old men shall dream dreams" (*hoi presbuteroi umon enupniōis enupniasthesontai*) "in the last days" for precisely the reason that "your sons and your daughters shall prophesy," namely, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh. Dreams and inspired prophecy are synonymous. Vision experiences during sleep are due to divine promptings.

The probabilities are that Jude 8 refers to heretical claims to special revelations based on divinely inspired vision experiences. James Moffatt so interprets the allusion.<sup>6</sup> That the errorists claimed guidance by the Spirit is clearly implied in Jude's heated denunciation of them as "worldly people, devoid of the Spirit" (v. 19).

For the author of Jude, their claims to prophetic visions refute themselves. Like false prophets of an older day they "prophesy the delusion of their own minds" (Jer. 23:26, American Translation). Their visions issue in falsehood, not in any trustworthy word from God (cf. Jer. 27:9, 10). They confuse fantasy and personal whim with divine reality and

<sup>6</sup> *The General Epistles: James, Peter, and Judas.* Harper & Brothers, 1928, p. 234.

solid truth. This is proven by the degrading effect of their teaching on morality. They confuse sexual with religious emotion and make Christian love feasts occasions for carousal (v. 12; cf. v. 4).

The degrading consequences of their counterfeit inspiration are related to their rejection of "authority" (*kurioteta*) and their denial of "our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ" (vv. 8, 4). The "authority" rejected is such as belongs to angels.<sup>7</sup> It refers to angels comparable in status to Michael (v. 9; cf. I Cor. 6:5, *kurioi*). The errorists apparently represent the gnostic view that angels lost all claim to respect when they served as agents of God in the creation of the material order. On that premise, denial of "our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ" probably meant either a denial of any real union of the divine with the human in the historical Jesus, or else the teaching that Jesus as the earthly contact in a series of "Aeons" did not deserve the reverence accorded him by orthodox Christianity. Should the reading suggested in a note in RSV be adopted (these men "deny the only Master and our Lord Jesus Christ"), and "Master" be understood to refer to God rather than Jesus Christ, the essential point would remain and would be a repudiation of reverence for the character of God supposedly revealed in Jesus Christ. This scorn of matter and the conviction that only the spirit could be saved enabled errorists to indulge their physical appetites with no sense of contradiction to their claims to spirituality.

These consequences are related also to the false basis on which they classify people, v. 19 ("It is these who set up divisions"). Thayer translates this clause: "Those who by their wickedness separate themselves from the living fellowship of Christians." Much more probably, the errorists subscribed to the gnostic division of humanity into people either "spiritual," or "sensuous," or "material."<sup>8</sup> The errorists claim to be "spiritual," and as such feel exempted from the demands of moral law. Moral discipline is for the "sensuous," who may thereby conceivably achieve salvation. "Material" or animalistic people are hopeless. Jude insists that the errorists err in classifying people on a basis of nature instead of character. He insists that men as such may receive the Spirit. Their only disqualification is moral unfitness, for which they are themselves responsible. Men become "sensuous" by being sensual (cf. James 3:15). On the basis of their immorality the vaunted spirituality of the errorists is seen to be counterfeit. Imagining they can be sensual and at the same

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Eph. 1:21; Col. 1:16; II Pet. 2:10.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Irenaeus, *Heresies* I. vi. 1-4.

time spiritual, they indisputably show themselves to be "worldly people, devoid of the Spirit" (v. 19).

The activity of the errorists diverted Jude from the preparation of an exposition of "our common salvation." It required that he write, instead, an appeal to faithful churchmen to "contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (v. 3). The "common salvation" of which he originally planned to write and "the faith" to whose defense he calls orthodox Christians are synonymous conceptions. A body of authoritative teaching constitutes the "most holy faith" (v. 20) upon which Christians base their hope of salvation. This authoritative doctrinal foundation is composed of ideas and complementary moral values flouted by the "ungodly persons who pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ" (v. 4). Christian instruction and exhortation customarily dealt with this traditional teaching regarding the nature and conditions of salvation. Successive generations of believers are viewed as having faithfully transmitted the teaching entrusted by Christ to the Apostles, augmented by the teaching of the Apostles about Christ. Jude regards this apostolic tradition as sacrosanct. It is inviolable and neither requires nor admits supplementation. It is an adequate and final deposit of the truth. Salvation hinges upon it. The duty of Christians is to guard and transmit "the faith" by which they have themselves lived. Jude might well have been the author of that usually omitted "pedestrian stanza" of "Onward, Christian Soldiers":

What the saints established  
That I hold for true,  
What the saints believed  
That believe I too.  
Long as earth endureth  
Men that faith will hold—  
Kingdoms, nations, empires,  
In destruction rolled.

Inference and explicit statement in the Epistle of Jude afford a surprisingly clear account of the emphases of this "faith." They are:

1. The Christian is expendable in the interest of his Master's cause. He is "a servant (slave) of Jesus Christ" (v. 1).
2. Christians owe the highly advantageous position they enjoy to God's love and power: "called," "beloved," "kept" (vv. 1, 2). God is their present guardian and the guarantor of their glorious deliverance at the *Parousia* (vv. 21, 22).
3. None are specially privileged. God's deliverance and preserva-



tion of men is open to all on conditions all can meet ("our common salvation," v. 3; *koimes soterias* means open to all who meet the conditions).

4. Apostolic tradition represents a body of authoritative, permanently valid, completely adequate truth regarding salvation. It is normative for Christian belief and practice (vv. 3, 17, 20: "The faith which was once for all delivered"; "Remember the predictions of the Apostles"; "Your most holy faith").

5. The historical Jesus, as represented in orthodox tradition, reveals God's true character. Acceptance of Christian teaching about him and obedience to his requirements are implicit in saving faith (v. 4).

6. God's invariable punishment of sinners shows he is profoundly concerned with moral values (vv. 5-7).

7. The finiteness of human understanding makes reverent teachableness and humility essential (vv. 8-16).

8. The authority of the faith on which Christians build is guaranteed by inspired Scripture and the equally inspired "predictions of the Apostles" (vv. 14, 17).

9. The evil character of the times indicates the imminence of the End and warns believers to be morally ready (vv. 6, 13, 15, 18, 24).

10. Spirituality has to do with character rather than with nature. So with "sensuousness" (v. 19).

11. The direct leadership of the Spirit is contingent upon making the "most holy faith" of apostolic tradition the foundation and framework of life (v. 20).

12. Human effort gives effect to God's love and power (v. 21, "keep yourselves in the love of God").

13. Orthodoxy warrants confidence about the ultimate outcome of life (v. 21, "wait for the mercy of our Lord . . . unto eternal life").

14. God works through the agency of good men in saving the "lost" (vv. 22-23).

15. God's power makes his redemptive love effective. Divine strength is available to men and keeps them from "falling" (v. 24).

Whether Jude would have concerned himself with just these emphases had he followed his original intention of writing an exposition of "our common salvation" is of course uncertain. They do, however, give an indication of what he took the fundamentals of "the faith" to be. That "faith" represents for him a foundation already and finally laid (v. 20; cf. Eph. 2:20). The spiritual growth of the individual depends on it. The

unity and progress of the church require it. The way men conduct their lives finds an explanation in what they believe. Antinomian errorists live demoralized lives because of their demoralizing creed. Orthodox churchmen live holy lives because of their acceptance of the premises of "our most holy faith."

This "holy faith" had a holy origin. It produces holiness in believers in proportion to the seriousness of their acceptance of it. Inspired as it was by the Spirit, it guides believers in the achievement of spirituality. Personal possession of the Spirit is restricted to those who accept it. Immediate inspiration and special revelation that are independent of this "faith" are spurious.

Jude shares the conviction expressed in the intriguing title of Richard M. Weaver's volume, *Ideas Have Consequences*.<sup>9</sup> That position, whether the selection of ideas be wise or not, arrested attention in Rome and inspired an appreciation sufficient to preserve and ultimately canonize the Epistle of Jude. The letter was part of the determination of the church to establish and enforce a distinctly Christian morality. Its insistence that morality is not whimsical, but must correspond to objective standards and tests has kept it relevant in all times of disorganization.

The disorganization of our own times gives Jude contemporary relevance. It enables the modern reader to see why Jude found and has kept a place in the New Testament. In three principal directions its message deserves the attention of those who lead the thought of the church today. Jude insists on reverence for the historical foundations of the Christian faith as the surest counteractant to an erratic and whimsical spirituality. Revelation must be consistent and coherent as well as continuous and vital. Theory must be squared with fact, instead of fact being dismissed or adjusted in the interest of hypotheses that owe their origin to fantasy.

Jude utterly rejects the perennially heretical distinction between morality and spirituality. Character rather than "nature" distinguishes human beings as children of a righteous God. Possession of the Holy Spirit is evidenced by the cardinal Christian virtues more certainly than by ecstasy and esoteric knowledge. The "faith" of the church is "holy" because it actually produces holy living on the part of persons whose decisions are governed by it.

Finally, Jude insists that religion and theology imply each other. What men believe matters in direct ratio to the seriousness with which

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<sup>9</sup> University of Chicago Press, 1948.

convictions are held. While religiousness and ideas about religion are not to be identified, it is equally true that religion enlists the mind as well as the heart. Great living is inseparable from great thinking. Christians must outthink the world if they are to outlive it. A touching and significant story illustrates this third emphasis. When William James died, his wife requested George A. Gordon, distinguished pastor of the Old South Church in Boston, to officiate at the funeral. In her note to Dr. Gordon, she said: "I want you to officiate at the funeral as one of William's friends and also as a man of faith. That is what he was; I want no hesitation or diluted utterance at William's funeral."<sup>10</sup> Jude has always sounded a warning against "hesitation" and "diluted utterance" on the part of Christian leaders. The church needs men in her pulpits who believe something, who take with profound seriousness the beliefs that really matter.

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<sup>10</sup> George A. Gordon, *My Education and Religion*. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1925, p. 198.

## A Review of the Quarter's Fiction

JOHN C. SCHROEDER

OCCASIONALLY THIS COLUMN causes me some slight embarrassment. My conscientious and responsible friends see it as an index of many misspent hours. I confess to certain twinges of a tainted Puritanical conscience when I remember Ruskin's remark that "if you read this book you will not have time to read that," and I see titles staring at me accusingly. But it's easy to rationalize, and since I read novels only late at night, it happens that many stories seem to pass in one eye and out the other. One always hopes that a novel will turn out to be significant. Rarely is the hope fulfilled. So novel reading becomes a harmless vice, repaying the reader with many pleasant hours and a few rewarding ones. The preacher is always the victim of a vocational temptation—the search for illustrations. A good one is as precious as a ruby and, unfortunately, as often found. I'm afraid that the preacher can discover no other reason for reading these particular stories than that human nature is interesting; and if these plots and characters fail to tantalize the imagination, some satisfaction may at least be had from speculating on the reasons why the authors felt it necessary to write them.

*Point of No Return* is Marquand's epic of a hero of the "lower-upper" classes. Marquand writes with gentle cynicism. He knows the faults and foibles of Charlie Gray; but it is clear that he both likes and respects him. As Malcolm Bryant, an anthropologist, says, "Charlie, it takes guts to be your type these days." But Charles "was not sure whether or not Malcolm Bryant had been laughing at him."

Charles and Nancy Gray live in a Connecticut suburb with their two children. A graduate of Dartmouth, he has been in the war and returned to his job in the Stuyvesant Bank. Nancy is intelligent, competent, and ambitious. Charles is a possible candidate for promotion. The story opens with a long description of a day in the life of a commuting banker—the bustle of the household at breakfast, the men and their conversations on the train, the hierarchy of the bank and the competitions for preferment within the organization, "the working day discussing the investment of huge sums of money, only to go home yourself and to

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worry because the butcher's bill has risen some twenty dollars above the previous one." Marquand's deft characterizations of these people, and of what makes them what they are, constitute an amazingly accurate description of the suburban mentality.

The bank decides to send Charles on a business trip to Clyde, Massachusetts, where he was brought up. The novel flashes back to his childhood and youth, where the contrast between New England and New York is sharply drawn. Mr. Gray was an inept, gently philosophical soul who played the stock market, failed in being a conventionally responsible citizen, but whose lazy casualness enabled him to understand the tensions and ambitions of his adolescent children. Charles' mother patiently and resolutely tried to maintain her family pride against her husband's impractical unconventionalities. Charlie went to the local schools and to Dartmouth, and fell in love with the daughter of the town's patrician, only eventually to discover that both father and daughter had lost the daring and strength which had originally given the family its prestige.

Charlie Gray is a responsible young man who works hard and intelligently. He has integrity and courage. Both Nancy and he know that their situation is throttling their imagination and forcing them into a pattern whose virtues they respect, whose disciplines they accept, and whose limitations they recognize. They have no illusions about the price they have to pay for the life they want. People like Charlie are Stoics and they are to be respected. They represent a way of life which is on the periphery of Christian living. Their code is the gentleman's code, and we in America, accepting it, are startled that the rest of the world is not ready to share it.

*Descent Into Hell* is a hard book to understand. Charles Williams sees time expanding and contracting, all of it in every moment. "If the past still lives in its own present beside our present, then the momentary later inhabitants were surrounded by a greater universe. From other periods of its time, other creatures could crawl out of death and invisibly contemplate the houses and people of the rise. The amphibia of the past dwelt about, and sometimes crawled out on the slope of this world, awaiting the hour when they should either return to their own mists or more fully invade the place of living."

The story opens with a humorously satirical sketch of a number of amateur dramatists preparing for a play written by one of their poet friends. They have no real idea that Battle Hill, where they live, was built over sod where battles had been fought, where the ancestor of one

of them was a religious martyr, and where they are actually confronting the people who have lived there before. Those who can recognize themselves and their other selves, knowing that no one lives to himself alone, will find peace. Those who see this but refuse to accept it, only descend into hell. The ending of the book is confused; but some of the writing is excellent; and the conception of time and space being always here and now offers not only great dramatic but also highly spiritual insights.

Mr. Williams' insights are an imaginative compound of Freudian and Christian concepts. Pauline Anstruther, the central character in the book, constantly meets her image, her *doppelgänger*. One of her friends is able to take her burden of fear on himself. But she, herself, must assume the burden of her martyred ancestor, which she can do only by helping a poor laborer who has ended his own life on Battle Hill and who is helplessly wandering between two worlds until she shows him how to find his way. This attempted solution of the problem of human personality is very different from the general acceptance of either Freudianism or Christianity. *Descent Into Hell* uses the modern concept of the timelessness of time to bring all of life's contradictions within the Christian confidence in love.

Many of our novels deal with problems of race. *Alien Land* is the story of a Negro who tries to "pass." The reasons for "passing" are obvious enough: a better job, to escape from "Jim Crowism"; the very excitement of the fact itself. Kern Robert's father had "passed." He had grown up in the atmosphere of violence which always pervades a southern city. He had become a lawyer and in Washington had married the daughter of a New England liberal. But he finds that it is psychologically difficult for him to escape the chains which loyalty to his race imposes on him. He decides to raise his son as a Negro. The mother reluctantly consents, understanding the compulsion which he feels to identify himself with his exploited people. The father works in every organization which promises to get a measure of justice for the Negro. The son, however, is fond of his mother's family and her friends, and finds the social identification with them not only more pleasant but more stimulating than his father's race. The plot reaches a violent dénouement when the mother is murdered and the father feels he has to defend the man who killed her. The passion for justice which controls the father as he deals with his own desire for racial identification cannot compel the boy. One could readily transpose this situation in terms of first- and second-generation Americans with the children unable to understand the loyalties



which move their parents. *Alien Land* is a most interesting commentary on the perplexing issue of racial amalgamation.

*Some Trust in Chariots* is a story of Wales during the last century. The Tewdwr family had, for many generations, been paid hands on the farms. But with the opening of the coal pits in Pontygly, two of the young men with the grandmother leave the country, start working as truck drivers and eventually become exceedingly prosperous. Rhys is a God-fearing man whose life centers in the Nonconformist chapel where he teaches in the Sunday school. As his children grow up in the luxury which was so alien to his own past, they drift away from the church which was the very center of Welsh culture. Harry, his nephew and partner in the business, is a very different character. He marries three wives, can never resist a pretty woman, and raises a large family of children who become interested in the theater.

The tale of the Tewdwr family with its many children is painted against the backdrop of the coal-mining industry. In the middle of the nineteenth century the miners were all political liberals, but the danger and drudgery and poverty of their lives turned them away from their leaders to left-wing doctrines. "Never again will I bother you, not even if we have three colliery explosions in the same year, as was the case in 1872, and again in 1884. Neither will I bother you when the same township in our hills of coal suffers a second explosion, as Ferndale did in 1809, Abercarn in 1878, Risca in 1882, Coedcae in 1883 and now Senghenydd, which is named after a saint of old, they say.

"This morning's colliery explosion at Senghenydd has broken all records by killing four hundred and thirty-six in the twinkling of an eye."

In the background, too, is the Welsh church. Once the creative center of every community, with great music and great preachers, it began to lose its hold on the people. Rhys Tewdwr loves his church, enjoys his preacher, and lives the strict moralistic life of Nonconformist England. In the business, he gets along very happily with Harry; but Harry's personal life, as well as the paganism of his wife and children, deeply distress him. His minister, John Foulkes, is a far more liberal and tolerant man than he. Foulkes is a noble character, and the story reveals great insight in its understanding of Protestant Wales.

Yes, and what must He think of these so-called "Pleasant Sunday Afternoons" which the English Nonconformist chapels up here in our hills of coal have inaugurated? This, we are told, is necessary to prevent your young people from drifting away from our chapels and Sunday schools. So things have to be made more

"pleasant" for them. The "bright" side of religion must be presented in the brightest way in quite short addresses. . . . I'm not so sure about this "intelligence," but then I am getting on in years, and it is the great days of Welsh Non-conformity that I dwell on with—perhaps—spiritual pride. Always remembering I am the great preachers through whom God came to shake me like the two-legged rat I was. And after a good shaking he washed me clean again and from the brink of Hell took me by the hand to the highest mount and from there, through a choral haze tinted with all the colors of the rainbow, he allowed me just a glimpse of the faraway strand of his kingdom.

*Some Trust in Chariots* is a fine novel. The characterizations are finely drawn, the plot interesting, and the theme raises many important questions about the relationship between Protestantism and an industrial society.

*The Melodramatists* is a smart, clever story in shockingly bad taste. It is brittle satire after the manner of Evelyn Waugh. Mr. Nemerov knows a great deal. He has a cruel wit, an irreverent spirit, and a crusader's zeal. But the theme of the book is an exceedingly exciting subject: the issue between psychiatry and authoritarian religion. The Boyle family of Boston is wealthy. The son, Roger, married to an adulterous wife, solves his personal problem by going off to war. The father, so deeply troubled by his situation, solves it by losing his mind, seeking consolation in an expensive asylum by spending his days in a bathtub of warm water. This leaves two daughters in possession of a mansion and a great deal of money to spend. Susan gets tied up with a psychiatrist, an unattractive charlatan who prostitutes both his profession and his women patients. Claire, cold and frightened, turns to the Catholic Church. The Bishop arrogantly exploits her submission by persuading her to make the house a hotel for "fallen women." From this point on, the novel spins its riotous way describing a household where nuns, Susan and her lover, street women, and venal servants all live together. There are parts of the story that are extremely amusing, even though they are needlessly bawdy.

But what is discouraging about it is the picture of a generation which has nothing to believe in and which turns vainly to these two conflicting therapies. The portrayal is unjust and unkind to both. Nevertheless, there is an element of truth in his satirical condemnations. His psychiatrist has no morality and his ecclesiastics have no conscience. Both are ready to exploit the hurt of our world and the malaise of people for their own advantage. Instead of helping, they make victims of their patients. *The Melodramatists* will shock readers by its irreverence. There is nothing

kindly or generous in its handling of a contemporary problem. It makes cruel fun of important matters, but in doing so, like all good burlesque, it lays bare the desperate extremes to which a disturbed generation is ready to go for help.

**Point of No Return.** By JOHN P. MARQUAND. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. pp. 599. \$3.50.

**Descent Into Hell.** By CHARLES WILLIAMS. New York: Pellegrini and Cudahy. pp. 248. \$2.75.

**Alien Land.** By WILLARD SAVOY. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. pp. 320. \$3.00.

**Some Trust in Chariots.** By JACK JONES. New York: William Sloane Associates. pp. 381. \$3.50.

**The Melodramatists.** By HOWARD NEMEROV. New York: Random House. pp. 338. \$3.00.

## Book Reviews

**Faith and History.** By REINHOLD NIEBUHR. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949. pp. ix-257. \$3.50.

Two classes of readers should find this book profoundly disturbing. They are the old-fashioned liberals and the older-fashioned orthodox. It is difficult to say which type of mind will be the more disquieted. Dr. Niebuhr deals perhaps more drastically with the illusions of liberalism—the sort of liberalism which finally became dominant in our culture and its schools in the early twentieth century. This seems to throw him into the camp of orthodoxy, and the term “neo-orthodox” has been coined to describe his theological position and that of such writers as Barth and Brunner, whose analysis of the human situation is akin to his own. But the revived orthodoxy which this term suggests proves, in Niebuhr's case, decidedly unorthodox. The reader should therefore abandon any attempt to classify the author in either category, but rather judge his thought by the single criterion of its truth as an interpretation of the human situation in the light of the Christian faith.

The question which this book sets itself to answer is this: Does history carry within itself the promise of man's redemption? By “history,” Niebuhr means the living stream of human experience and events in time. By “redemption,” I take him to mean not merely man's final arrival at a state of perfection; his question is more radical. He asks whether there is any movement in history *toward* such a goal. His answer is negative. He maintains that the belief in moral progress and the hopes which such a belief inspires are illusory. This means, I take it, that modern man has made no *moral* advance upon his ancient ancestors, but stands under the same divine judgment for the same kind of sins that beset them and will continue to beset mankind to the end of history. There is no principle of redemption through progress in history.

Nor does the Christian gospel change the character of history in this respect. All Christians must live in the same history as non-Christians. They participate in its moral ambiguities and face the same temptations that non-Christians face, plus certain subtle refinements of these temptations which arise from the very virtues of the Christian calling and the self-deception inherent in the sense of achievement of these virtues. In a word, not even the Christian can divest himself of his human nature and its implication in the ambiguities, the precariousness, and the inevitable evil that is inseparable from his very being as a man.

It is at this point that Dr. Niebuhr has made his most profound and illuminating contribution to theology. In face of the popular optimistic view of human nature, he revives and adopts the unpopular doctrine of original sin. But he is not content to explain this doctrine by a literalistic use of the story of Adam's fall and the racial taint which the older theology attributed to it. Instead, he looks directly into the nature of man and finds the root of sin, or the inalienable condition of sin, in the very constitution of man. Man is a child of nature, Niebuhr sees, and as such is finite. But man also transcends nature—including his own nature and the processes of history—in memory, in reflection, in imagination, in hope, and in decision. In his transcendence lies his freedom. Between his finiteness and his freedom there exists a congenital tension. This tension

can be relaxed either by forgetting that he is free and thus lapsing into the carnality of nature, or by forgetting that he is finite and grasping at a power or a virtue that is beyond him, thus falling victim to the sin of pride. But man cannot maintain in sinless balance the claims of finitude and the appeals of freedom. Here, says Niebuhr, is the ground of human sin, and it is original in the sense of belonging to the created structure of human nature.

This penetrating insight is the pivot upon which the whole Niebuhrian "theology of history" turns. It is the key by which he unlocks and reveals the fallacy of every rationalistic and naturalistic philosophy of history which hopes for either an inevitable or a voluntaristic progress toward the redemption of the human adventure either by the growth of man's reason or the inherent goodness of human nature. Historical progress on the level of man's moral life is thus an illusion. The human adventure in the world of time will always be dogged and corrupted at every stage by the inalienable fact of sin—inalienable, because it springs from the constitution of man, as man.

To many this will sound like rank pessimism. Dr. Niebuhr is well aware of this interpretation. His first answer is that a view of the human scene tinged with such pessimism is more wise than a view based upon a false optimism. The latter can only induce false hopes which end in disillusionment and despair. Our civilization is now, he affirms, in a state of spiritual and moral depression because we had derived our hopes from a false philosophy of history which, without warrant, took over from biological science the doctrine of evolution and applied it as a guarantee of inevitable progress in human history. In a word, we expected more from history than history can deliver.

But Dr. Niebuhr's second answer is an appeal to the Christian faith. He maintains that the same "pessimistic" view of man's predicament which he derives from a direct analysis of human nature and by a realistic survey of human history is a salient and radical characteristic of biblical religion. Christianity has no illusions about man, though it invests him with a nobler dignity than any philosophy or other religion has conceived. But it deals realistically with him as the sinner that he is. And it offers redemption both from despair and from the sin which, apart from the Christian revelation, inevitably leads to despair. What is the nature of this redemption?

I shall not have space to do justice to Dr. Niebuhr's thought at this crucial point. It must suffice to say that he adopts a thoroughgoing eschatological conception of the Christian faith which posits a climax and end of history with a resurrection of the dead and a final judgment. Until then, we are "redeemed" or "saved" by apprehending the mercy and forgiving love of God as revealed in Christ. This could be called an interim salvation, pending the final fulfillment. It is never an actual or secure possession; we are saved only "in principle." The human nature of the Christian is not structurally changed. He is still subject to the temptations inherent in the tension between his finiteness and his freedom; that is, "original sin" is not extirpated. But sin and suffering are "transfigured" by the "recognition" of God's forgiving grace and power and by faith in the sure triumph of God at the end of history. With this assurance, Christians are able to transcend the frustrations, the apparent injustices, the catastrophes of history, in the faith that "nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus."

Both liberal and orthodox readers will find it difficult to reconcile this view

with their deeply established, though dissimilar, conceptions of Christian life and faith. They would both wish to ask Dr. Niebuhr the same question. It could be stated thus: If there is no redemption through progress, may there not be progress through redemption? Does not the grace of God apprehended in Christ introduce a new factor into the human situation which actually modifies man's nature when he surrenders his freedom to the will of God? And does not this surrender open a way of progressive fulfillment even in history? No doubt Dr. Niebuhr has faced this question in his own thought, but it would be helpful to have a more explicit comment upon it than he has given in this challenging book.

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**Existence and the Existent: The Christian Answer.** By JACQUES MARITAIN.

Translated by Lewis Galantière and Gerald B. Phelan. New York: Pantheon Books, 1948. pp. 149. \$3.00.

This book was completed in 1947 and first published in French. Not only is the translation a very able one, but it is almost too faithful to the original. The discursive mind of the French would seem to stand twelve- or fifteen-line sentences better than the more practical American mind. The idea of cutting such long sentences evidently did not occur to the translators because they both are philosophers in their own right. Their version is a model of precision and should be praised as such in an intellectual world where the best translator remains the forgotten man.

From the outset, then, the reader knows that he is in for an arduous journey. The translators did not smooth his path; neither does the author entice him to venture out with the allurements of a popular subject. Should some fashionable lady buy the book so as to be in a position to talk existentialism at her bridge party, she would have only herself to blame. The very first lines make it clear that "this brief treatise on existence and the existent may be described as an essay on the existentialism of St. Thomas Aquinas." Even Monsieur Sartre, who remarked recently that "existentialism" no longer signifies anything at all, must have had a fit of "nausea" at seeing the new medievalism claim the very heart of his vanishing realm. Neither could the man who probed the depths of nothingness seek refuge in the hope that, after all, a neo-Thomist must produce a congenial fellow existentialist—an up-to-date Thomas quite at home in the Latin Quarter, and likely to lend new glamor to the existential truth now claimed as his. Is not such a promise implied in the "*vetera novis augere*" of Pope Leo XIII? Evidently not; for Maritain declares emphatically that he is not a neo-Thomist but a Thomist pure and simple. As such, he would be ashamed "to trick out Thomas Aquinas in a costume fashionable to our day." There is, however, a deeper reason why the author is not concerned to "rejuvenate" Thomism by means of "verbal artifice" (is this what the neo-Thomists are actually doing, may we ask?). To make that all-sufficient reason plain is to formulate the author's main thesis.

Essentially, Maritain's position is that Aquinas is the measure of all genuine existential thinking. Once the philosophy of Thomas freed itself from all deforming servitudes, its true faculty of assimilation was revealed in the resulting unified perspective of integrated knowledge. Having clearly and firmly distinguished its domain from that of theology, the perennial philosophy laid claim to



all knowledge available to man, namely, to the intelligible Treasure of being, delivered to the intellect by sense. And it is because cognition, our highest sensitive power, actually apprehends the individual as existing under a common nature, that our knowledge is existential, nay, immersed in existence. Seen in this light it is truly a gift from the Creator to his creatures, from the self-subsistent Act of Existing to the existent. Such is the divine order, and as such it induces a yearning for the divine which constitutes the very core of the existential experience of knowing. Not that a divine scenario be forced upon man; merely an impetus to good. Each one of us is a "free existent" creature with a sense of both genuine initiative and wretched failure, in a world of divine fair play where the evil of free act is our own creation. Hence Thomism is not merely an existential intellectualism, but a practical existentialism as well. It cannot be separated, still less isolated, from the ethical judgment of conscience which it inspires and directs.

Such is, in the main, according to Maritain, the Christian Answer to contemporary forms of existentialism. These same forms can only be described as aberrant, inasmuch as they differ from the norm of Thomism. The Kierkegaardian category of anguish, for example, is not only "worthless as a philosophical category," but it actually springs from a radical irrationalism destined to fall back upon the night of the subjectivity from which it proceeds. "Frenzy is allowable in the prophet. It is forbidden in the philosopher" (p. 132). Frenzy indulged in by the philosopher would seem to hold the secret of existential dialectics so called.

We have hardly begun to scratch the surface of this thought-provoking book, the most direct, the most deeply human the author has yet produced. As an essay on the existentialism of St. Thomas Aquinas, this brief treatise on existence and the existent will remain a classic. Thus the author made good on his promise.

There are some who will question Maritain's basic presupposition to the effect that St. Thomas is the measure of all genuine existential thinking. Others will go further still, and state that the Thomistic notion of existence is at opposite poles to modern existentialism as they learned to think of it even in the life-work of Kierkegaard. But this is admittedly another question, as Kipling would say, and an author should be judged according to what he set out to do.

EMILE CAILLIET

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**Jesus, Son of Man.** By GEORGE S. DUNCAN. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949. pp. xvi-290. \$3.50.

Principal Duncan of St. Mary's College is Regius Professor of Biblical Criticism in the University of St. Andrews, currently Moderator of the Church of Scotland, and a well-known author of numerous books and articles in the field of New Testament studies. Best known hitherto for his contributions to the understanding of the work and writings of the apostle Paul, in the present volume he demonstrates the ease with which a scholar, thoroughly at home in the area within which he writes, moves about among his source materials, choosing here, rejecting there, bringing forth an original thought in the third place—and all this with reference to the "mind of the historic Jesus" about himself and his work. Principal Duncan's writings have always been notable for the fearlessness with which they deal with the facts involved, the entire sincerity with which the

writer uses the various techniques of his profession, and an originality of approach and of conclusion which is stimulating to the earnest student of Christian Origins.

The present volume exhibits these characteristics in marked degree. It is rather breathtaking to read a book like the present one which cuts across so many stereotyped positions, carving out a clear path for itself and, regardless of well-defined cleavages between the "schools," coming to conclusions of its own in a way which makes it impossible to "catalogue" the author. For example, although Professor Duncan reiterates on many pages the thought that Jesus did not think of himself in terms of *Messiah* (pp. 119-134, et al), he holds with equal tenacity to the belief that our Lord did consider himself to be *Son of God* (pp. 106-118), *Suffering Servant* (p. 92f.), the "promised prophet" like unto Moses or Elijah (pp. 92f.), and, above all, the *Son of Man* (pp. 135-153). Moreover, in our Lord's conception, the phrase "Son of Man" was not in the first instance an "apocalyptic" one (pp. 138-141), but rather was intended by him to lay stress on "the Biblical conception of man" and his "central place in the purposes of God" (pp. 144, 147). Jesus took the phrase, the author believes, not from the *Similitudes* of I Enoch, but from the prophet Ezekiel (pp. 145ff.), and he intended thereby to indicate that "he represents in himself the climax of all God's purposes for man" (p. 146).

It is difficult to gather the multifarious elements of a book of the comprehensiveness of this one into the compass of a single thesis. Perhaps it will be most instructive for the reader to make a quotation wherein the author attempts as much. "It is clear," he writes, "on every page of the Gospel story that Jesus, who is himself in the truest sense *man*, accepts it as his divinely ordained mission to bring men home to *God*. And to do this he must redeem them from the powers that enslave them. He is therefore never merely preacher and teacher; he is conqueror and deliverer. And men come to acknowledge him as Saviour and Lord. The power that inspires his words and his actions is recognized to be the power of the Living God. It may be claimed, therefore, that in Jesus God himself draws near to men, and that through him every barrier that separates man from God is broken down and removed. In and through Jesus God and man are reconciled" (p. viii). In accord with this thesis the author reiterates again and again that Jesus was not interested in titles or names, but rather in men's attitude of "faith and obedience" (p. 272), that through the same they might come to know the Living God (chaps. iii, iv).

The book is divided into three parts and contains seventeen chapters. In the first part, entitled "The Historical Problem," the author deals in a fresh way with the positions of the various contemporary schools of New Testament criticism, as well as with the essential elements in the teaching of Jesus. Here, as elsewhere, Dr. Duncan makes it clear that he holds unreservedly with neither the Barthians, nor the form critics, nor the apocalyptists like Schweitzer, nor the traditional liberal school. Rather he believes Jesus to have stood in the *prophetic* circle, while he also far transcended its human limitations (p. 185). In the second part the author treats the subject of "The Person of Jesus," more especially from the standpoint of our Lord's own consciousness of who and what he was. For he believes that the endeavor to discover the "mind of the historic Jesus" can be more rewarding than many would have us believe today. In the third and concluding section he devotes four chapters to "Jesus and the Church," concluding here that God's purpose (and so that of Jesus) is "the establishment of

his Kingdom" through "the redemption of a new order of manhood" (p. 267) of which Christ's church is the exemplar on the plane of history.

It is difficult in a short review to give expression to one's deep sense of gratitude for a book like this. Its deep insight into the mind of the author's Master, its wealth of reference to the contemporary literature about its subject, its profoundly spiritual tone and marked sincerity of purpose—all these and many other notable attributes mark it as one of the genuine contributions in our time to an understanding of Jesus. I should like to associate myself with the author's major conclusions, particularly with his placing of Jesus in the prophetic rather than in the apocalyptic category, and in his denial of Jesus' interest in and prophecy of the date of the final consummation (p. 185, et al.).

JOHN WICK BOWMAN

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**Jesus and the Disinherited.** By HOWARD THURMAN. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949. pp. 112. \$1.25.

What does Jesus offer those whose backs are to the wall?

That question, Dr. Howard Thurman, minister of the Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples in San Francisco, would hold firmly before the Christian churches of America. It is crucial for the underserved, the great majority of the two billions who are "members one of another" on this planet. It is also terribly relevant to the spiritual health of us who are overprivileged. What Dr. Thurman has to say speaks directly to the condition of us all. He brings to the question no glib answer, but the probing of one of the most fearless, honest and widely ranging minds that the Christian church has produced in this generation. The insights of this book are from a layer of consciousness too deep for bitterness.

The Jesus here presented is not one who asks men how they feel under the lash. He himself is under the lash. "Christianity as it was born in the mind of this Jewish teacher and thinker appears as *a technique of survival for the oppressed*. That it became, through the intervening years, a religion of the powerful and the dominant, used sometimes as an instrument of oppression, must not tempt us into believing that it was thus in the mind and life of Jesus; he announced the good news that fear, hypocrisy, and hatred, the three hounds of hell that track the trail of the disinherited, need have no dominion over them."

Fear was no academic matter with Jesus. Like those who have to face possible lynching any hour of the day, the Son of Man, the Champion of the Dispossessed, was also without civil liberties. For Jesus, there was no immunity as there was for Paul. "If a Roman soldier pushed Jesus into a ditch, he could not appeal to Caesar; he would be just another Jew in the ditch." You have to be insecure yourself, haunted by insecurity day after day, before you can realize "what worlds separated Jesus from Paul at this point." It was Dr. Thurman's "illiterate" grandmother who taught the boy, reading aloud to her from the Bible, this too-long-neglected and very important fact. As a girl, she had made up her mind about Paul. That man couldn't understand the exploited as Jesus could. He had political status; Jesus didn't. Paul, no doubt, said some fine things. But he couldn't quite deliver the word, the fissionizing word, direct from God as her old Negro preacher, also a slave, would deliver it when there were no white folks around: "You—you are not niggers. You—you are not slaves. You are

God's children." When Howard Thurman's growing spine tingled with that message, he began to be secretly armed with the integrity that has power, it may be, to disarm the seemingly mightiest opponent.

Because God really does care, there need be no terror. Because God is truth, men can be transparent with one another. "There must always be the confidence that the effect of truthfulness can be realized in the mind of the oppressor as well as the oppressed."

But how about hate, the deadliest of the hounds of hell? "Hatred tends to dry up the springs of creative thought in the life of the hater, so that his resourcefulness becomes completely focused on the negative aspects of his environment." In its place must be a new kind of audacity. Jesus' treatment of the woman taken in adultery suggests what this is. "He met her where she was, and he treated her as if she were already where she now willed to be. In dealing with her he 'believed' her into the fulfillment of her possibilities. He stirred her confidence into activity. He placed a crown over her head which for the rest of her life she would keep trying to grow tall enough to wear."

This is a strong, objective book, beautifully free of both grievances and gush. There are flashes of poetry; it is leisurely in spirit. But don't be deceived by the unforced laughter and the sparkle of homely, poignant stories: the prophetic impact of these all-too-brief pages will be a chain reaction at work within the conscience of many a Christian. It may even break open the prejudice of minds dead set against the church.

I sat as near as I could get to the author as he delivered most of this book in the form of chapel meditations to five hundred students at Asilomar during the last Christmas vacation. Some of us had the feeling that a tide breaking in from the unseen world was lifting us. From among the shadows far to the right of the huge, uncurtained window he shared with us the big, simple things which Jesus had made so real to him. We found ourselves looking not so much at him as away beyond, across the sand dunes outside toward the Pacific whose surge, above the organ notes of Howard Thurman's voice, could almost be overheard.

ALLAN A. HUNTER

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**The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley.** By J. ERNEST RATTENBURY. London: The Epworth Press, 1948. pp. 253. 15s.

Dr. Rattenbury needs no introduction to persons interested in the Hymnody of the Wesleys. His right to a place with the competent expositors of the Wesley hymns—George Osborn, Henry Bett, and, it may be added, Bernard Lord Manning—was established by his Fernley-Hartley Lecture, *The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns*. The present volume carries on the work of the Fernley-Hartley Lecture. It is dedicated to "The Members of the Methodist Sacramental Fellowship." The members of the Fellowship of Saint Luke in this country will doubtless regard themselves as properly included in the dedication.

The book is clearly intended to foster the resurgence of sacramentalism in Methodism. Dr. Rattenbury's critics have charged him with sacramentarianism. He vigorously repudiates the charge, but gladly admits that he is a sacramentalist, and claims that in this respect he follows the Wesleys themselves. The Eucharistic doctrine which he propounds in the early part of the volume is "high," but the evidence is undeniable that it is the true Wesleyan doctrine. The headings of some

of the chapters in the book, such as "The Protestant Crucifix," "Priesthood and Sacrifice," and "Sacrifice and the Altar," might conceivably startle some readers; but the sacramentalism is kept in such close and vital relation with the evangelical experience and its faith-basis, that even the nonsacramentalist will hardly be deeply disturbed. "It should never be forgotten that these hymns were Revival hymns, and that Sacramental worship was not only not contrary to Evangelical, but was . . . one of its chief results" (p. 18).

The "hymns" referred to make up the volume, *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, published by the Wesleys in 1745. Extracts taken by John Wesley from Brevint's treatise on *The Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice*, constituted the Preface. These extracts, and the 166 Eucharistic Hymns of the Wesleys, are reproduced by Dr. Rattenbury. Brevint was an Anglican clergyman, whose loyalty to the Stuart dynasty made it necessary for him to flee to France. After the Restoration of Charles II, he returned to England, and in 1681 was made Dean of Lincoln. His views on the Eucharist may therefore be expected to be anti-Puritan and anti-Zwinglian, but they were just as definitely anti-Roman. They were, in fact, the views of Anglicanism. The "Presence" of Christ in the Eucharist was understood in a sense similar to that of Calvin: it was "real" according to the activity of faith.

The Eucharistic hymns to which the Brevint extracts serve as introduction are altogether in keeping with Brevint's teaching. Rattenbury insists steadily on this fact. "Wesley's conception of the real Presence was much more Calvinistic than Lutheran or Roman" (p. 11). The extracts and the hymns give us the early Methodist teaching on the Eucharist—indeed, "the true Methodist doctrines." Since the 1745 collection, *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, went through nine editions in Wesley's lifetime, it is clear that Wesley never changed this early teaching.

This is the teaching that Dr. Rattenbury unfolds with insight, appreciation, and enthusiasm. He does not refrain from occasional criticism: for example, he calls Hymn 114 "very bad," but chiefly for a ridiculous analogy. The chapter on "Realized Eschatology," meaning the actual outcome of the Eucharistic faith as the "future" life become a "present" experience, should be of itself sufficient to vindicate the author's complete sympathy with the Wesley evangelicalism.

It is to be hoped that a way will be found to make Dr. Rattenbury's volume available in this country. While it is naturally addressed more directly to Methodists, its appeal is actually much wider than that. Wherever there are evangelicals who are not sacramentalists, and wherever there are sacramentalists who are not evangelicals, the message of this book needs to be considered.

EDWIN LEWIS

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**A Herald of the Evangelical Revival.** By ERIC W. BAKER. London: The Epworth Press, 1948. pp. 203. 12/6.

**William Law.** By HENRI TALON. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949. pp. 106. \$2.00.

Dr. Baker's book is a meticulously documented account of the relationship of William Law to John Wesley and the Evangelical Revival. After a preliminary historical survey, the author deals with Wesley's indebtedness to Law, his disagreement with Law, and the influences of Law on early Methodism—inserting a criticism of Christopher Walton's defense of Law in the controversy



of these great souls. The author clearly is a champion of Wesley, except for a brief, tolerant passage in his final "Summary and Conclusion."

The disagreement of Wesley and Law is such as seemed bound to happen, given their diverse minds. As the author points out, Wesley's interests were practical, Law's devotional; and the sympathy of readers with the views of the author will largely depend on their type of mind. Irrespective of opinion, however, if the reader's bent is toward an academic use of the literary microscope, and he has sufficient interest in the subjects of this investigation, he will have a glorious time with this work—which to those who have little interest in literary "histology" will seem tediously overdocumented.

It is a careful piece of work; and the reader will find good discussions of the rival theories of Wesley and Law on the atonement, justification, the new birth, heaven, hell, and all the great evangelical doctrines; and he may find it interesting to observe how one aspect of Truth, emotionally experienced, makes a just appraisal of other aspects extremely difficult; and, indeed, may easily lead to erroneous exaggeration of the primacy of the views one may hold.

Dr. Talon's small book of a hundred pages is a little gem. It has nothing to do with controversies involving views on both sides long since discarded; it is simply a fresh and fascinating study of William Law the writer. Perhaps this book could be classified as a book by a writer, about a writer, written for writers—though more than they will find it interesting. It is excellently written. One is constantly stumbling upon felicitous phrases and expressions he simply must underline and "taste."

Although the book is in no sense an exposition of the doctrinal or spiritual content of Law's writings, the author succeeds in deepening their interest and significance by revealing them as progressive expressions of the deepening and mellowing spiritual experience of the Moralist who became a Mystic (or, as Dr. Baker puts it, traveled from Law to Grace).

There are five short chapters: "A Brief Biography," "A Sketch of the Intellectual and Religious Background" (the two chapters occupy only ten pages); then three great chapters, "William Law as Logician and Wit," "A Study in the Art of Persuasion," and "A Literary Study of the Mystical Writings." This last chapter, naturally, is the longest, and occupies half the book.

In the first of these last three chapters, the cold precision of Law's style is compared to that of a mathematician. In the second, he is the stern moralist; in the third, he is the mellow mystic, writing in a new style—"the style of love," which, says the author, has the characteristics of certainty, majesty, and music. Buffon's famous word, "Style is the man," is amply vindicated in this fascinating literary analysis. One can only say it is an excellent study in literary craftsmanship by one who himself is an expert craftsman.

ERNEST WALL

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**The Best of John Henry Jowett.** Edited by GERALD KENNEDY. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948. pp. xix-167. \$2.00.

Bishop Gerald Kennedy has rendered a notable service to religious circles in the English-speaking world by gathering together what he considered to be the best from the works of Dr. John Henry Jowett. The book contains twelve of Dr. Jowett's sermons, a score of meditations, six short addresses, twenty-five prayers, the major part of which consist of only two or three sentences, five



Bible studies, and two chapters from his Yale Lectures on preaching, *The Perils of the Preacher* and *The Preacher in His Pulpit*.

I believe that most persons acquainted with the printed works of Dr. Jowett will agree that Bishop Kennedy has shown genuine discrimination in the selections that he has made. These sermons, meditations, and addresses of Dr. Jowett will give enduring delight to readers as they once did to those who were fortunate in hearing this prince of preachers in Great Britain or the United States.

These excerpts from the pen of Dr. Jowett will serve to confirm the judgment of most authorities that he had no superior as a pulpit orator and probably no peer among the preachers of the twentieth century.

This reviewer has before him, as he writes, several original penned manuscripts of some of the sermons included in Bishop Kennedy's book. Time and again one sees the changes made in the manuscript by Dr. Jowett as he hammered out with meticulous care these golden sentences, paying particular attention to his choice of words. In some instances he has altered adjectives in his manuscript as many as three times before finding the word to suit his consummate artistry.

These printed sermons and addresses, of course, convey in only a minor degree the preacher's tremendous power in the pulpit. His voice was a superb vehicle for carrying to the hearts of his listeners the full beauty of his illustrations and his matchless prose. It ranged all the way from a note as soft and sweet as a flute to the challenging call of a bugle.

Dr. Jowett's seven years' ministry in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church has left fragrant memories of his deeply consecrated personality in that church and throughout New York City.

Bishop Kennedy's book will be of special usefulness to young ministers who do not already possess in separate volumes the sermons, meditations, and addresses from which this compilation is drawn.

JOHN SUTHERLAND BONNELL

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**No Uncertain Sound: Sermons That Shaped the Pulpit Tradition.** Edited by RAY C. PETRY. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1948. pp. xiii-331. \$4.50.

"Short sighted leaders, dreading the loss of human favor, often fear to speak the right openly . . . the words of Isaiah can be applied to many. They are all dumb dogs, not able to bark, for they have a bone in their mouths." Here, in no uncertain tones, Michel Menot (sixteenth century) challenges the leaders of his day. Many other blunt words appear in this anthology of sermons from the third century to the Reformation. For instance, Savonarola, as Dr. Petry so aptly puts it, "took the Bible as his text and proceeded on the basis of it to his own death." Clear voices ring through these messages. They will encourage the preacher to preach the truth forcefully.

These sermons also encourage because they show that preacher problems are about the same. Hrabanus Maurus complains (about A.D. 800) that men fail to attend Mass. On the Sabbath day they hunt, shout, drink, or give themselves up to dice. Berthold cries (about A.D. 1250), "Ye women, ye go to church more readily than men. . . . You would be saved but for this one snare, which is called vainglory. . . ." Wyclif criticizes because "many preach themselves,

and fail to preach Christ; and so sermons do less good than they did in meek times." Listeners were not absolutely attentive, for Bernardin breaks off in the middle of a sermon to say, "Hast thou understood me, O woman, thou who sleepest over there? I fear not!"

A rich selection of various types of sermon structure is presented in this volume. Scriptural types are here. Allegory is here. The blessed sermon trinity is here, particularly in the tri-headed sermons by Aquinas. Sermon seeds and outlines and many telling illustrations are presented. Deep insights repay study. Meister Eckhart, for instance, writes, "God is at home, we are abroad!"

The introduction to this volume, with its able study of sermon production, has as much worth as the sermons. This study of the development of sermon manuals, the use of Scripture in sermons, the place of liturgy, and the development of social concern, should prove of great assistance to any preacher or student of homiletics. Biographical notes in the introduction and before each selection whet the appetite for more information. Study of this volume makes one feel the need for a companion volume of post-Reformation preaching. Study of these sermons leaves one reverently grateful for preachers fearless of men and faithful to God. They knew men. They knew God. They knew and preached Christ.

WILFRED HANSEN

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**The English New Testament: From Tyndale to the Revised Standard Version.** By LUTHER A. WEIGLE. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949. pp. 158. \$2.00.

A book by Dr. Weigle is bound to have two outstanding characteristics. It will be scholarly, and it will have a practical purpose. Dr. Weigle, the Dean-emeritus of Yale Divinity School, is the chairman of the American Standard Bible Commission, which has already published the Revised Standard Version of the New Testaments and is at work upon the Old Testament. The practical purpose of this little book is to show the reasons for the new revision and to advocate its use especially in services of worship as well as for private reading. Its scholarship appears throughout as he traces the history of all English versions, giving copious quotations from sources and estimates of scholars.

His purpose is stated at the end of the book, "Our lives must be undergirded . . . by commitment to those eternal principles . . . revealed in Jesus Christ." To use different versions "in public worship and for education and evangelism" he thinks will "separate pulpit and pew, worship and life, church and education . . . when these are already too far apart." He is aware of criticisms of this new translation and objections to its displacing the King James Version on the one hand, and on the other the more liberal vernacular translations by Goodspeed and Moffatt, and he invites further criticism and suggestions. Some have thought it did not differ enough from the 1611 Version, and others have not seen the necessity for changes. These questions are answered in detail, and a tabulation of words with changed meanings is added as an appendix.

The first four chapters are a condensed and scholarly history of the New Testament English Versions, with especial credit to Tyndale and his unique linguistic genius as the basis of the King James Version. He gives excellent illustrations, as, for example, in calling attention at length to the meaning of the Greek and Tyndale's use of "love" instead of "charity" as in the 1611 edition. He dis-

cusses the excellence of the King James Version, why it was accepted for over two hundred years, and the reasons for the revisions which began to appear in the nineteenth century. That Noah Webster had such a prominent part in that effort will be a surprise to many.

This book deserves hearty recommendation for accurate information. It is for ministers and teachers primarily, rather than the rank and file of the laity. The history of the English Bible is a most fascinating story, and should interest even children, youth, and the many adults who are comparatively illiterate concerning the Bible. Dr. Weigle would doubtless agree, for Tyndale's life was a peculiarly exciting one, full of adventure and heroism, and his appearance at just the right moment in English history, with just the right birthplace, background, and education, drew out his exceptional gifts. But this Dr. Weigle has omitted, and also some of the very spicy correspondence with his critics, like Sir Thomas More, showing his gift for language—sharp, pithy Anglo-Saxon words. His answer to More concerning his use of "love" instead of "charity" is a case in point. The Geneva Bible, also, with its comments, illustrations, and controversies cuts a much larger figure in its influence upon the common people than the few sentences given to it would convey. If a minister or teacher wishes to arouse real interest in the Bible by a lecture on the English versions, he should supplement this book with others of such human interest.

LAURA H. WILD

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**The Romance of New Testament Scholarship.** By WILBERT FRANCIS HOWARD. London: The Epworth Press, 1949. pp. 164. 7/6 net.

The five chapters which constitute the main body of this little volume were given as the Lectures on Christian Biography at Drew University in October, 1947. Chapter six, which deals with the colorful life of Sir William M. Ramsay, had already appeared as an essay in *RELIGION IN LIFE* (Autumn, 1939). That article had been read with so much interest by the authorities of Drew University that they decided to invite the author to give the tenth course of lectures in their series on biography. The invitation was extended in 1939, but the lectures had to be postponed until 1947, when it had become possible to think about something else than war. The last chapter was included appropriately, not only because its original publication had called attention to the author's ability in biography, but also because Ramsay's scholarly career constitutes a part of the romance of biblical studies.

The method of treatment is naturally determined by the fact that the material was to be delivered as lectures, as well as by the presupposition that it must be biographical. Both of these factors have contributed to the clarity of style and lightness of touch which make the book a pleasure to read. The author succeeds remarkably well in conveying to the reader a sense of the real drama that has gone into the scholarly efforts to secure, to preserve, and to understand the New Testament through the centuries. There was a time when the church had no New Testament. For a hundred years the only Scripture which Christians had was the Old Testament.

Dr. Howard begins his lectures with the fascinating story of Marcion, the celebrated wealthy shipowner from Sinope on the Black Sea who arrived at the church in Rome in A.D. 139 aflame with devotion to the loving God of the Gospel, while repudiating not only the Old Testament but also the brutal God which it

seemed to him to reveal. It was of him that Harnack coined the famous epigram, "In the second century there was only one Gentile Christian who understood Paul, and he misunderstood him." Having thrown overboard the only Scripture which the church possessed, this heretic sailor set his fertile mind to the task of constructing a new one, which comprised the Gospel of Luke and ten letters of Paul, not including the pastorals or Hebrews. Thus the first Christian New Testament was a heretic Scripture, and the church was immediately goaded into the task of setting up one which would be orthodox. But this is only one episode in a wonderfully thrilling story. Space does not permit me to begin to mention them all.

From the ancient period the author selects for treatment also Origen, the first great Christian scholar, and Jerome, the most famous of the ancient translators. Then he brings us to the modern period for the main part of his lectures. F. C. Baur and A. Harnack are selected for their work in New Testament history; Lightfoot, Hort, and Westcott give us British textual scholarship; Tischendorf, Harris, and Charles represent brilliant manuscript discoveries; the workers in papyri are Grenfell, Hunt, Deissman, Moulton, and Milligan, with mention of the two Americans, Sanders and Goodspeed.

Such a brief treatment of a great field naturally has to be very selective, and one misses scholars whose story he would like to hear. There is nothing, for example, of the effort to write the life of Jesus, a problem which has challenged the greatest scholars for two centuries; nothing of the magnificent story of translation from Wyclif, Luther, and Tyndale to Goodspeed; nothing of the social and religious historians from Schürer and Reitzenstein to Case. The story is almost exclusively European, and most of the space is given to those aspects of scholarship in which the British have excelled.

S. VERNON MCCASLAND

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**The Reunion of the Church.** By J. E. LESSLIE NEWBIGIN. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949 (London: S.C.M. Press, 1948). pp. 192. \$3.00.

It is well for us in these days when we so freely use the word "ecumenical" to recall that it means "inhabited world," and then to thank God for a church established throughout the world. Much of it is weak and faced with overwhelming tasks. A sign of its vitality, however, is to be found in the urge to union. This volume has as its theme the most comprehensive church union so far—that of the Church of South India.

The author is a bishop in the new Church of South India and a former missionary of the Church of Scotland. He is a vigorous defender of the scheme of union, reflecting, of course, his non-Anglican background and bringing into the argument that caliber of theological thought which is typical of the Scots.

Bishop Newbigin emphasizes the fact that this union originated on the "mission field" among "younger churches." The principle of "comity" or avoidance of overlapping by Protestant denominations in India was an important prompting factor. This meant that a member of one denomination had no church home in another locality where his church was not represented. He was reluctant to change his affiliation. This situation called either for establishment of a church of each denomination in every locality—a physical impossibility—or reunion. The latter course was chosen.

In a crude but telling illustration the problem is stated. The presence of

two rival temperance societies in the same community is not scandalous; but a temperance society whose members are habitually drunk—a denial of its basic aim—is scandalous. A divided church, denying basic unity in Christ, is a scandal.

The writer mentions two viewpoints which minimize the problem of disunity. The one is the Roman Catholic view: some Christians have fallen away from the true Church; they must simply return. A common Protestant stand is: we are one in spirit; we must only increase cordiality.

There follows a rather detailed discussion of the nature of the church's unity and continuity. Christians are described as the Israel of God in the Pauline sense, by faith. An extensive critique is given of the Roman Catholic view of the Church as an "extension of the Incarnation." Here the author is at his best. "The Church is a communion with the living God in the Holy Spirit." He regards it as a most difficult problem that the church is both sinful and holy, as is the individual Christian. Thus the church must receive the continuous grace of God through Christ, and in this fact is to be found its unity and continuity, not just in the sense of historical succession.

It would be helpful if the Constitution and the complete texts of other documents pertinent to the scheme of union in South India had been included in an appendix. Bishop Newbigin does, however, quote at length from these sources. He discusses in considerable detail the inevitable questions of doctrine, the ministry and the sacraments, and the South India approval to them.

He summarizes the scheme: "The method of reunion in South India rests, then, upon these four points: first, the recognition that the uniting bodies are truly parts of the Church and their ministries real ministries; second, the recognition that the act of union is not the merging of autonomous groups to create a new Church with a new ministry, but the restoration of a broken unity, the return to a ministry standing in the historic succession inherited from the undivided Church with a view to the eventual restoration of a ministry accepted and fully effective throughout the world-wide Church; third, the recognition that the unity of the Church is a reality in the personal realm and that therefore many vital matters are to be secured not by detailed regulations but by assurances given and received in mutual confidence alone; fourth, the recognition that the union can only be regarded as a stage on the way to the wider reunion of the broken Church, and that, therefore, the decision of certain questions must be postponed till time has been given for growth in unity both within the Church and among those Churches with which it seeks to be in communion."

The writer testifies that there was a "sense of compulsion," a sense of guidance by the Holy Spirit, which led to the Church of South India. He constantly stresses this: "Reunion must be the restoring of the unity which has been broken, the fruit of a penitent's return to Christ himself." "Our deepest need is not synthesis but repentance."

The volume is timely. It is practical, for it is related to an *actual* reunion of the "churches" of those from Anglican, Methodist, Congregational, Presbyterian, and Reformed backgrounds. It is immensely significant for the whole Ecumenical Movement and should be helpful in other moves toward the reunion of the churches today.

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**Protestant Churches and Industrial America.** By HENRY F. MAY. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949. pp. x-297. \$3.50.

This book is a stimulating analysis of the rise of the social gospel from the standpoint of a social scientist with a deep yet critical interest in the church, rather than the slant of a church historian. Professor May, therefore, sees the development of social Christianity as an aspect of those American political and reform movements known as Progressivism, and he is concerned to show how the social gospel "gave encouragement" to a trend which has "in the broad perspective and with many interruptions and failures, dominated American history increasingly since its appearance" around the turn of the century. For this reason the author is more interested in the economics and politics of the reformers than he is in their theology.

The careful reading of this painstaking study should be a humbling and soul-searching experience for the socially minded and the conservative alike. For the liberal because of the lack of realism, the political ineptitude, and the often lukewarm commitment that robbed the crusade of its authority. Conservatives of today might well lie awake nights thinking over the callous words of a generation which in the cataclysmic years of 1877, 1886, or 1892 found the roots of labor's unrest simply in "corrupt human nature." None other than the "liberal" Henry Ward Beecher, the greatest pulpit orator of his day, fingered a pocketful of uncut gems while counseling a starved proletariat to the self-discipline necessary to live on one dollar a day. Authorities no less than official denominational periodicals described strikers as "worse than wild beasts turned loose upon society," to be stopped if possible by "the club of the policeman," but if that did not answer, "then bullets and bayonets, canister and grape"—and "no fooling with blank cartridges"; by an application of "a little of the vigor of the first Napoleon" against the "red-handed and blazing license" of workers whose trade unions were equated with communism, "neither of which can exist in peace with the Republic." There is a curious contemporaneity about all this.

For both liberal and conservative it should be a shock to realize that neither could effectually bring Christian ethics to focus upon the pagan morality of the Gilded Age. It is true that the prophets of Israel were as yet buried beneath a heavy layer of prophetism and that Shailer Mathews had not discovered the social teachings of Jesus; but the resources to which clerical spokesmen turned under the stress of social turmoil were the clichés of classical economics and the optimistic aphorisms of American democracy, not the word of the Lord against inhumanity and the crass paganism of an age whose demigods were named Vanderbilt and Carnegie. That he has brought into bold relief the almost total inability of the spokesmen of the Protestant churches either to understand or to sympathize with the working classes at the critical moment when the foundations of the modern labor movement were being laid, may well be Dr. May's primary service to churchmen of today. He has very ably sharpened the distinctions between the right, left, and center lines of social Christian thought.

The work suffers somewhat because of its terminal date at 1895 rather than a generation later when the movement reached its height, though the author has made up for this inadequacy at least in part by indicating his awareness of subsequent developments. The result is a somewhat distorted perspective that tends to place Gladden rather than Rauschenbusch in the central position, though Dr. May is probably right when he says that Gladden, whose right-left orientation was very near center, more nearly typified the main line of social gospel develop-



ment than did Rauschenbusch, whose later leadership veered to the left. This reviewer finds himself in disagreement with some of the author's theological interpretations, and his lack of interest in theology is a weakness but not a major fault, of which, in fact, there are none. The book is by far the most exciting account of its subject which has yet appeared. It should have a wide reading and a significant influence. As a Harvard study, it is another evidence of the growing interest in American religious history on the part of the universities and of their leadership far ahead of the theological seminaries in this regard.

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**The Effective City Church.** By MURRAY H. LEIFFER. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949. pp. 232. \$2.75.

This is an excellent book. It is timely, welcome, exceedingly wise and helpful. Every city pastor, and every denominational or interdenominational administrator of city work, should read it. Seminaries will doubtless put it on the required list for all students of the sociology of the urban church.

I have found only one item of urban sociology that seems to have been omitted—the curious fact that the direction of prevailing winds often determines the shape of a city. In other words, here is competent, inclusive sociological analysis of cities as such. When it comes to urban churches themselves, this is a long-awaited volume that will automatically go to the top of the list. Professor Leiffer must now be reckoned with as one of the most helpful leaders in the ecumenical movement.

Put out by Methodists, written by a Methodist, this book is just as valuable for Presbyterians, Congregationalists, or Baptists. Not till page 68 does the term "Methodist" occur, and it is hardly more than an accident then.

Here is no bag of tricks. There are no "helpful homiletical hints," no directions on how to conduct funerals or weddings. If one is interested in understanding the habitat of the city church and how it must behave to survive and grow, here is the whole story, so far as present knowledge is concerned, told in straightforward, simple English. Here is generic Protestant experience made lucid and readable. Let no reader be led to assume that, because the meaning of the text is so plain, the author lacks profundity; not so. At a score of points, in ways large and small, Professor Leiffer reveals the breadth of his inductive contacts and the shrewdness of his insights.

If anybody wants to get a quick picture of the American city, its characteristic communities and their churches; how to diagnose their problems, and plan for their future; or the details of specific methodology for the study of the urban church, here is the one best book to date.

Several hundred people plan to attend the 1950 Convocation on the Urban Church, to be held under a new Joint Commission of three great nation-wide interdenominational councils. This reviewer will suggest that every one of them should read this volume. It makes the task of the Convocation easier, and at the same time more urgent. Like the report of the Lincoln town and country conference, this volume puts all the rest of us in debt to American Methodism.

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**Pastoral Counseling.** By SEWARD HILTNER. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949. pp. 291. \$3.00.

We knew that someone would do it—that some day a book would be written for religious workers which would do for them what Carl Rogers' book, *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, does for the secularists. To put counseling principle and procedure into an ethico-religious setting gives lift to the enterprise of personality and marital guidance. Hiltner's principle of the "eductive" is really an adaptation to the pastoral function of Rogers' noted idea of the "nondirective."

The extensive use of "interview material" makes the parallel with the work of Rogers vividly evident. *Pastoral Counseling*, however, offers in dialogue form, a given interview first in an incorrect and inept manner and then in a more effective way. This makes possible a comparison and gives light as to adequate counseling methods. Aside from its pragmatic use, it must be remembered that leaning upon interview material has its hazards. One would regret any conclusion that, merely to duplicate the facility of handling of personality problems, the deflection of irrelevancies, the sympathetic questioning or assertion, constitutes counseling. Concerning dependence upon the resource of interview material, Hiltner says, "It may not—we do not yet know—capture the most important elements in a counseling relationship that is extended in time and scope."

Great importance is to be attached to that which is going on in the feeling life of the counselee and that which is going on in the conative and perceptual life of the counselor. Listening is not mere passivity. The dynamics of counseling must have its freedom, creating an alive insight and a fermentation of forces within a person, by which changes are to take place.

In view of the author's limited pastoral experience, his assumptions of the counseling function are exceptionally apt for the pastoral field. His development of a view of the ministry as "one role" is most interesting. Implicit in this concept is the dangerous likelihood of patterning the other functions of the ministry after the mind-set, approach, and exercises of the counseling role. At this point oversimplification may prove a considerable hindrance.

There is no doubt that the counseling function influences the minister in respect to preaching, for example, it compels a more definite and less generalized type of message. However, if the counseling role, with its nondirective principle, were completely to dominate preaching, it is likely that most of our congregations would remain quite comfortable about personal sin or public injustice.

Likewise, it would be absurd to believe that in the administrative work of the local churches the pastor is not to tell people what to do or how to do it. The cases cited in the book at this point of the discussion involve personality problems and not executive situations.

There are some extraordinary values in this book. The description of "brief," "extended," and "strategic-problem counseling" is a vital contribution toward clarification and classification of the counseling field. Again we cannot be told too frequently that to moralize, generalize, coerce, or "theologize" problems into solutions is illusory.

One of the most important emphases of the book conveys the necessity of understanding the feeling of the seeker. At a certain juncture of a given interview, Hiltner comments, "This is the kind of point where the need for a parishioner to feel reassured can be easily confused by the pastor with verbal expressions of re-

assurance on his part. For instance, 'We all have our needs. I am sure others are despondent too'; or 'Different people are affected in different ways. Others may have felt it too.' In each instance the response is to the words, not the real feeling."

This understanding on the part of the counselor is a blending of reflection and feeling. The blended power functions by means of empathy, or what in evangelicalism we call vicariousness. The author says of the good counselor, "He will not make mechanical application of methods. He will not confuse understanding the parishioner with starting every sentence with 'you.' Nor will he conclude that the trick in counseling is merely never to introduce any ideas of his own. He will be concerned not with ideas as such, but with their feeling content—what they mean to the parishioner. And he will not be interested in tricks of any kind."

Quite extensive consideration is given to the question of preparation for counseling. The most serious handicap in this matter of preparation is the lack of graduate work based on the Christian approach. Dr. Hiltner, who has been identified with the Council for Clinical Training, believes that sound preparation includes work in an institution, where the theological student learns how to minister "to people in stress situations." The time will come when theological schools will offer field work appropriate to each student in view of his special interest, such as the rural church, downtown institutional work, and in view, likewise, of his specialization, such as counseling. The field work for the latter will be secondary counseling in specific pastoral situations, under supervision.

One can only praise the high seriousness that forms the overtone of this book. One can well believe that the motive basic to Dr. Hiltner's unusual self-giving to this field of service, as well as the motive in writing the book itself, is made clear at least to some degree in his comment: "Broadly speaking, the special aim of pastoral counseling may be stated as the attempt of the pastor to help people to help themselves through the process of gaining understanding of their inner conflicts."

HAZEN G. WERNER

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**The Church's Ministry in Our Time.** By HENRY KNOX SHERRILL. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949. pp. viii-161. \$2.00.

We have come to expect a stimulating discussion when we pick up a volume of the Yale Lectures on Preaching. We are not disappointed in our expectation when we have read Bishop Sherrill's *The Church's Ministry in Our Time*. After a very realistic facing of the spiritual state of the world and of the churches, he emphasizes the need of a vital faith in God, "his otherness and his givenness," and a living fellowship with Christ. Turning to the break-up of the Roman Empire as a period similar to that in which we live, he is sure that our salvation is dependent on an intellectual and spiritual interpretation of our times. The last lecture is a challenge to the minister of Christ and a conviction that his task is worthy of all we have and all we are.

As one reads the closing lecture he is aware of the fact that Bishop Sherrill has been the kind of minister he urges others to be. Holding one of the most distinguished ecclesiastical positions in the church of today and exhibiting more genius not only as a leader in his own church but in world Protestantism, Henry Knox

Sherrill is such a pastor and preacher as the church needs—and that he has been through the years of his ministry.

His picture of the church's plight seems a bit pessimistic, but it is a picture by a man who has come up against those stark realities which wars and their consequences have brought to our world. His experiences in the First and Second World Wars as chaplain and guide of chaplains brought him in touch with destruction and despair. A church cannot serve, cannot be more than a spectator in an age of change, unless it confesses its mistakes and realizes its very great tasks. "There is nothing to be gained by an unreal optimism." "Men are longing for leadership and guidance. They are eager for spiritual power and for vision. If we have convictions, then let us not be ashamed of them. The entire fellowship of the church, whatever our differences may be, can unite in proclaiming with one voice that the omnipotent God reigneth, but more than this, that in Christ he has shown his redeeming love."

The church must be the church; it must have the spirit and the intensity of the sect; it cannot lose the experience of the mystic. So Bishop Sherrill thinks, and then he goes on to say this about the union of the churches: "In reality in a divided Christendom every so-called church is a sect, for no communion has, whatever may be claimed, the whole truth of God. On the other hand, every communion has revealed the fruits of the spirit in devotion to God's will. What is needed on the part of every communion is a greater humility of spirit, a deepening of faith, a realization of the urgency of the times, and a surrender to the leading of God." Such an attitude will mean the Universal Church, the One Church of our Lord Jesus Christ!

How penetratingly Bishop Sherrill compares the Roman with his dependence on "a fortunate coincidence of character and circumstances" with the citizen of the modern world. As Christianity came with its strengthening of mind and heart and soul to the Roman world, so once again Christianity can, through great thinking and great living, supplementing the church's active program, save this present world. And there is the minister's great opportunity. "The minister strikes directly to the very heart of the world's need as he proclaims the eternal message of God."

Get this book, and become a new, a good minister of Jesus Christ.

IVAN LEE HOLT

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**Bearing Witness to the Truth.** By HAROLD COOKE PHILLIPS. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949. pp. 219. \$2.50.

This book by Harold Cooke Phillips, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Cleveland, is another volume in the long series of America's most distinguished lectureship on preaching—the Lyman Beecher Lectures at Yale Divinity School.

The six chapters which comprise this book deal competently with a great theme: namely, the truth which it is the Christian minister's task to know and to proclaim. He must forever seek to deal with truth at the deepest levels: truth about God and man, truth about life here and hereafter.

But what is truth? The author defines its characteristics in terms of three axioms. First, truth is objectively real; therefore, man does not create it, he discovers it. Second, all truth is one; hence it is universal. Third, truth is indestructible; therefore it will ultimately triumph.

These three axioms Dr. Phillips relates to the business of preaching, defined

as the proclamation of "truth through personality." More particularly he seeks to show that the basic ingredient of all truth is not primarily intellectual but moral. It is therefore in the direct province of the preacher, and not only of the philosopher, or of the scientist.

But how can we know the truth? Here the author deals with five familiar ways: authority, reason, intuition, experiment, and, at greater length, revelation. Revelation, he says, is the uniquely religious way of knowing the truth. Our faith in this way rests upon two assumptions: "that finite man cannot of himself discover the ultimate truth; and that truth is by its very nature communicative." In religion as in science there is a response when we find the truth, we find as we seek.

To the question of *where* God reveals himself, the author mentions three avenues: first, in nature; second, in history—through mighty acts, moral laws, and great personalities; and, third, in our own hearts—"the still, small voice."

One chapter is devoted to the sermon as the particular medium of expressing truth. The unique part of this discussion is the author's fascinating exegesis of two chapters in *Moby Dick* in which Melville deals imaginatively with "a preacher, his pulpit, and his sermon." Beyond this there is nothing new, but there is much sensible advice from one who has been himself a successful craftsman for a great many years.

The chapter, "The Preacher and the Truth," says many familiar things and says them well. Dr. Phillips could not quite avoid the use of alliteration when, as the four marks of "a workman needing not to be ashamed," he mentions industry, integrity, interest in people, and independence.

The concluding chapter comes to grips with "Christ as the Truth." "In Christ we confront truth in a life, truth in personality." Most of the chapter deals, however, with certain fairly familiar and traditional insights of Jesus as related to our lives. The emphasis is upon Jesus as a teacher.

The point of view of the writer is that of liberal Protestantism. There is excellent and skillful use of Scripture. There is humor. It is a book in which every minister will find a wealth of creative ideas which will help him to be a better preacher, "rightly dividing the word of truth."

ALBERT J. PENNER

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**The Reawakening of Christian Faith.** By BERNARD EUGENE MELAND. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949. pp. xiii-125. \$2.00.

Sometimes a lecture series calls for the production of ideas. But the Clark Lectures at Pomona College served as the occasion upon which Dr. Bernard E. Meland could present a thesis which he felt demanded expression. He contends that the scientific view of life is the interim view. Christian faith reaches beyond the horizons of experience. Experience and faith are inseparable dimensions, both of which must be understood if we are to make the most of life. He discovers a reawakening of the Christian faith through the spreading of this understanding.

The author examines the thought of leading current theologians on the nature of the human problem ("meaningfulness in existence"). In his analysis he points out that the current theological situation has many facets beyond a head-on collision between neo-orthodoxy and liberalism, calling to witness not only the theologians, but poets, psychologists, and philosophers. After citing testimony from the reactionary



and liberal forces, he points out that we can understand neither ourselves nor the human problem until we take seriously "the perspective of man which extends our thinking beyond the observable range of our social experience."

In discussing the meaning of divergent interpretations of Christian faith, Dr. Meland declares that the literalist becomes an enemy of the faith because his literalism causes him to fail to rise to the elevation of insight. The sentimentalist fails because he can neither amply stimulate nor clarify life's processes. The demand is for the proper concept of creation by which God infuses feeling into brute process, giving actuality to tenderness, meaning, and beauty.

These attributes he studies in God and in man, concluding that without them there could be no existence nor actuality. There could be no meaning to existence without the restraint of brute force and the cultivation of sensitivity of the human spirit.

The book is valuable as a scholarly appraisal of the dominant currents of thought in the field of theology and metaphysics today. It goes further to hold high the chief ends of man in an optimistic and triumphant manner. Students of theology will welcome it.

WAIGHTS G. HENRY, JR.

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**Christianity and Civilization.** By EMIL BRUNNER. The Gifford Lectures, 1947. The First Part: Foundations. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948. pp. xi-172. \$2.50.

Dr. Brunner's main thesis is that civilization depends on its Christian basis; and that having departed from this, it is in grave danger. The author does not develop this as an analysis of history itself, but as an investigation into the underlying "fundamental questions of human existence" which underlie any civilization.

Culture, or civilization, is defined as the "sum of productive forces and productions by which human life transcends the animal or vital sphere" (p. 10). Besides the given factors of the natural environment and the physical and spiritual equipment of men in a particular area, culture depends on a third factor, spiritual presuppositions. Nine of these, an attitude to which is regarded as basic to any culture, are reviewed: the problems of being, truth, time, meaning, the place of man in the universe, the relation of personality and humanity, justice, freedom, and creativity. In examining each problem the same general line is followed: what the author conceives to be the Christian view is contrasted with that which stems from the Renaissance, as well as with idealism in the technical sense. The conclusion is always the same, that in respect to every one of these presuppositions, the course of civilization since the Renaissance has been downward, because once the Christian view has been abandoned, there is no stopping place this side of naturalistic nihilism.

No matter which one of these lines the author is following, he arrives at the collectivist totalitarian state as the logical climax of degeneration. He does not lay the blame altogether on the world, the flesh or the devil, but is free to accuse the church also on at least two counts. By an exaggerated authoritarianism she laid interdicts on intellectual activity in realms where she had not that kind of authority, not distinguishing between God-truth and world-truths; and by her dogmatism she betrayed how far she misunderstood the nature even of God-truth. Though each chapter covers the field of modern history, there is little overlapping; yet the general



impression and conclusion is always the same: the de-Christianization of culture has led us to the point where we must decide either to go on to the "effacement of anything truly human" or to return to God.

It is a meaty book, thought-provoking and sometimes provoking on every page. The typical Brunnerisms are here: the discontinuity, even a sharp opposition, between God and the world; the identification of Christianity with Reformed thought as the author, not the actual Reformed churches, understands it; the irrationality of reality (p. 26); a strong suspicion of everything ordinarily called progress; the denial that we can know God in any sense as we know an object; the attack on immanence; the denial that reason is a common link between God and man.

Special criticisms will occur to many readers. A Bishop Oxnam or an H. D. Lewis will think that the author is blind to the actual fact of moral progress in history; a Catholic like Étienne Gilson will insist that Dr. Brunner has, on his own grounds, no business philosophizing anyway (see Gilson's *Christianity and Philosophy*, chap. II). Others may query such propositions as that Kierkegaard contributed to European thought "nothing but original Christianity"; or that Christianity views temporal life as meaningless in itself; or the suggestion that were God taken seriously, wars would cease (which seems to be implied on p. 157); one may ask whether Dr. Brunner is fair to idealism in affirming its doubt of the value of individual personality (shades of Royce and Hocking!); his back-to-God proposal seems at times hard to distinguish from the Roman Catholic nostalgia for the thirteenth century.

One could also proceed with criticisms in detail. For instance, the author's position in regard to Time is in many ways naive. The difference between the occidental and the oriental attitude to time is not, as the author supposes, a metaphysical matter at all but is related to the difference between urban and pastoral civilization; the notion of the beginning and end of time is scarcely a basic Christian conception, and hardly consistent with the idea of time as such; and it is certainly not consistent to speak of God's acts or thoughts "before" time. Does it give us anything but a neat phrase to call time an "intermezzo between election and perfection"?

However, aside from particular doubtful matters, most readers will find the book well worth the reading; will agree that the loss of the religious basis is the most serious ailment of our culture; and will await with interest the author's response, in his second series, to his own challenge, that the church must reinterpret the Christian message so as to show how, in concrete situations, the freedom of the individual and the order of society are alike founded on dependence on God.

KENNETH J. FOREMAN

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**The Common Ventures of Life.** By D. ELTON TRUEBLOOD. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949. pp. 124. \$1.00.

Elton Trueblood gives us in this book an easily readable, philosophically sound, and practically relevant treatment of the fundamental human experiences of marriage, birth, work, and death. The book is a splendid application to modern life of the simple New Testament Christianity which is characteristic of the "Friends." The author's words have an authentic gospel ring that should lead the common people to hear them gladly.

The first chapter deals with the recovery of wholeness, and sets forth the

central theme of the book, that "The differences in human life depend . . . on what men *do*, but on the meaning and purpose of their acts. . . . The major question is not, 'What act do I perform?' but 'In what frame do I put it?'"

The remaining four chapters treat successively the four experiences which the author says stand in human importance in a class alone—namely, falling in love, producing children, working with brain and hand, and dying. These experiences are profoundly religious when in them one discovers the unity of life, the spiritual frame which glorifies life. Indeed they become sacraments—experiences in which the spiritual and the material intertwine so that spiritual meaning and power is conveyed by a material process.

*The Common Ventures of Life* is written primarily for those who are outside the organized church, and will help them face the inevitable problems of their lives. It will also be read with great profit by ministers, partly because such people are every minister's concern, and partly because the book defines so helpfully the task of the church. The true function of the church is not to conduct a service of worship which is appealing because it is a pleasant escape from the hard realities of life, but it is to develop the spiritual meaning of life's inevitable and all-important ventures. The book is filled with helpful suggestions on how to accomplish that task in effective marriage counseling, in making the marriage ceremony and the sacrament of baptism events in which the congregation takes part, in helping men recover the lost sense of Christian vocation, in home religious celebrations, in helping people face death by seeing it in a framework of divine grace, and the like.

Any minister who reads this little volume without growth in all his pastoral work and without feeling some helpful sermons well up in his soul may well ask himself how young he was when he died!

WINFIELD S. HAYCOCK

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**How to Think Creatively.** By ELIOT D. HUTCHINSON. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949. pp. 239. \$2.75.

Have you ever felt a book was written just for you? This is my feeling as I come to the close of *How to Think Creatively*. For thinking creatively is our business as human beings (*Homo sapiens*). If you are a scientist, an artist, a writer, a teacher, a minister, an executive, a housewife, a parent, a builder, a mechanic, or a gardener, you are a creative thinker who wrestles with baffling problems and tries to work out solutions. If so, you will also find this a book for you. For it helps us to understand ourselves thinking.

Hutchinson is a psychologist who for many years has been gathering data on how creative workers think. By searching biographical statements and by questionnaires sent to eminent thinkers in various fields, he has analyzed the conditions that retard and methods that achieve creative results. Some plod steadily along, grinding out the work soberly and systematically. But eighty-three per cent of American men of science and directors of research laboratories report moments of sudden intuition after puzzling delays, when new and unpredictable insights bring their most creative solutions.

Four stages are typical of these unfolding insights. (1) The stage of *preparation* may take years of tedious effort in defining problems, setting up hypotheses, with trial-and-error activity. (2) The stage of *frustration* comes to an impasse when in sheer desperation the problem is given up for a time to regain emotional

balance in a change of activities and take a new perspective. (3) A period of *insight* breaks upon a thinker as he suddenly gains release in a flood of vivid ideas, emotional exaltation, and personal integration. (4) The work of *verification* is where the insights are put to the tests of re-examination, checked against external realities, overstatements reduced, and conclusions carefully revised. If any of these four steps are missing, the results are thereby inadequate.

The chief value in this psychological study is its practical usefulness in the actual tasks of thinking. A surprising amount of our daily thinking is futile because we do not know how to do the job. The study of logic, mathematics, art, ethics, or religion is apt to be a formal exercise that does not often reach creative levels of achievement. Here we are shown the psychological conditions of creative work, the motives which inspire it, and the methods of enacting it. The clarity, wisdom, and literary quality of the book invite the reader on, even to a second reading, and frequent underlining of pithy sentences. The author well demonstrates in this work the power of clear thinking, and stirs within the reader a wistful determination to lead a more creative life.

PAUL E. JOHNSON

Boston University School of Theology, Boston, Massachusetts.

**The Political Community: A Study of Anomie.** By SEBASTIAN DE GRAZIA.  
Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948. pp. xx-258. \$4.00.

Sebastian de Grazia, political scientist, and Assistant Professor in the Division of Social Sciences of the University of Chicago, illuminates brilliantly some ideas about contemporary society in this interesting and informative volume. The problem which Professor de Grazia considers is an analysis of the belief-systems of the political community, their inevitability, their psychological function, and the insidious effects of their weakening or decay. The word "anomie" was first used by the French sociologist Durkheim in a descriptive fashion in *De la division du travail social* (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1893). In a later work, *Le Suicide* (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1897), the word was expanded into a concept and assigned a prominent position. And, finally, in the preface to the second edition to the former work, Durkheim made up for his previous neglect by treating the subject extensively.

Professor de Grazia seeks the reasons for man's need for common beliefs and he examines the beliefs that bind citizens together in a community. The Great Community, as the Greeks well knew, the community which embraces all other communities, is the political community. Holding it together are systems of beliefs. The basic denominator of citizens is these belief-systems which express their ideas concerning their relationship to one another and to their rulers. Without them, without this fundament of commonness, no political community can be said to exist. The study of anomie is the study of the ideological factors that weaken or destroy the bonds of allegiance which make the political community.

For many years now the importance to men of common belief-systems has been neglected, for the scholarly world has been intent upon discovering the cause of diversity and contradictions among the peoples of the world. True, Arnold J. Toynbee has been searching for the common psychological factor in the breakdown and disintegration of all the civilized societies in the world's history. In thus looking for a force that has had a weakening effect upon belief-systems, he, too, has made a veritable study of anomie.

A brief review cannot discuss the many implications which emerge from this

study of the political community, but an indication of Professor de Grazia's approach can be given by mentioning three distinctive features of the study: (1) the analysis demonstrates the close psychological connection and mutual support of religious and political ideologies and thus asks for a reopening of their joint study by political scientists; (2) the study shifts the concentration of political theory away from economic classes and their antagonistic interests to the genuine political groupings of ruler and ruled; (3) the study points to the ruled population, the people, and it stresses their common need of "rulers" of a type that can be trusted. Professor de Grazia finds unrealistic the proposition that man can live a life divorced from values or beliefs. Stress comes, however, when new belief-systems conflict with the old and cause their deterioration. Serious conflict, for instance, has come about in our society between the "competitive directive" of the business world and the political and religious directives toward co-operation.

Professor de Grazia carefully draws upon the lives of other ages and other lands. He finds support in psychobiology, in political science, in religious history, and in the wisdom of literature. He demonstrates that today the great democracies of the world are the scene of a basic conflict. The ideal of man as a Citizen and Believer has been cheapened by other conceptions of man, alien concepts, neither political nor religious. This degradation of an ideal can eventually bring ruin to the democratic community.

Dr. de Grazia's book is neither ponderous nor dull. It is tremendously challenging, vital, and profound.

WILLIAM P. SEARS, JR.

Professor of Education, New York University, Washington Square, New York City.

**Judaism: a Way of Life.** By SAMUEL S. COHON. Cincinnati: The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1948. pp. xxii-423. No price given.

The author is professor of Jewish Theology at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, and the book fulfills admirably the requirements of a systematic treatment of what its title represents. Herein is systematic theology of liberal Judaism. The present reviewer is prompted by reason of the field in which he works to quote at once from p. 147 a passage showing the author's general point of view as a theologian: "Aside from the mythological coloring of his [Jesus'] character, the unhistorical elements in its portraiture and the messianic claims made for him, Judaism has refused to consider him, any more than any other individual, as the absolute ideal for all the ages. Neither Moses nor Jesus, Socrates nor Hillel, Buddha nor Mohammed, Epictetus nor St. Francis can serve as an infallible standard of conduct for all the generations of men of all times and of all lands."

The author virtually posits an ideal beyond all such details and proceeds to show, with all due respect to Jewish historical tradition—for he considers the Torah as representing the once "revealed will of God" (p. 245)—that plastic Judaism fulfills this ideal. That is, Judaism is adequate to "fashion human character and behavior," the Torah having for its ultimate purpose "the sanctification and perfection of humanity" (p. 4). A certain emphasis is placed upon morals, but in the form of "godly living," for he asserts that "mere morality produces neither the sense of sin nor the desire for purification, forgiveness, and deliverance . . ." (p. 272). Place is allowed for progress by further revelation of God and his will, and by man's adjustment to the divine program. Worldly perfection, however, can scarcely

be attained; at least, there has been no perfect man as men's example (p. 147). Nevertheless, "the divine in man" operates emphatically, and Judaism expounds in this connection an altogether "unique doctrine," says he (i.e., *kiddush hashem*, the sanctification of God's name). Thus religion is the basis of ethics, whether social or individual, he insists—although at times he seems to indicate that morals put life into religion, men letting all their works be for God's sake.

This reviewer has been puzzled sometimes as he read. Almost too much, perhaps, has been attempted in this 365-page book, for the sake of being at once systematic and comprehensive. Some inconsistencies seem inevitable in any effort to liberalize historic Judaism. Each reader must decide often for himself what the author's balance is, for example, between the individual and the social (cf. p. 183), or to what degree his "Zionism" has affected his interpretation of historic Israel (p. 192), what form resistance to evil should assume (p. 199f.), what may be the present role of Judaism in the world (p. 209), and how large the economic profit motive rightly looms (p. 123, etc.). There can scarcely ever be, however, any doubt that the author is a Jew; and his own Judaism may account for the difficulties now and then in reconciling liberalism and tradition (cf. pp. 251, 253).

Or some difficulties may have come of the author's handling of his 445 references to other works and authors—a scholarly performance none the less, requiring fifty-five pages of enumeration in this volume only. Who indeed is sufficient to reconcile so many sources? They do detract sometimes from the author's independent handling of his theme. But on the whole we have before us a sound and wholesome volume expounding an ancient, honorable, and persistent faith which, in the author's view, rests even yet upon three pillars: the Torah, Worship, and Self-renewal. And in terms of these supports, Judaism is finally described. They indicate and determine what should be done in Judaism's name with sin and evil, how men may repent of sin, atone for evil, find health of body and of soul through prayer and discipline, and withal through faith and devotion may build "the synagogue and Jewish life tomorrow" (p. 365).

The reviewer is bold enough to say that such Judaism as is here expounded in this attractive volume has an obligation not only to itself but to the world, neither to lose itself in the world, nor to convert the world, but by the sanctification of God's name to join with all men everywhere who would do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly in God's ways. One other faith, at least, must go farther by reason of its sacraments, but no such heritage can be ignored as that which prophetic Israel provides.

JOHN CLARK ARCHER

Hoover Professor of Comparative Religion, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

**Booker T. Washington—A Biography.** By BASIL MATHEWS. Cambridge, Mass.: The Harvard University Press, 1948. pp. x-350. \$4.75.

Although the name of Booker T. Washington is one of the best known in America and in some other parts of the world, he is conventionally considered in connection with his leadership among Negroes in the post-Civil War era and his founding and development of Tuskegee Institute.

But the influence of Washington is not limited to his own times and the peculiar problems of the period in which he lived. Washington spoke to the generations to come. It is this interpretation of the man and his work which makes



Mr. Mathews' book of such great value today. He presents the life of Mr. Washington both in its historical background and its global perspective and gives an appraisal of Washington's enduring place in history. Washington is presented "not as a puppet of circumstance, but a creative person whose ideas, guiding his will in action, cause events that are a part of history."

In this book, Mr. Mathews tells the story of the rise and ambitions of Booker T. Washington, his heroic and successful fight against poverty, his growing conviction of the place of the Negro in civilization, and his poise and balance in a world which failed to recognize the Negro as an integral part of American life.

He depicts the progress of the Negro from slave days through emancipation to his coming of educational age. While other works have been written which tell this story, Mr. Mathews does so in a rather exciting and unique manner. He depicts vividly and convincingly the educational philosophy of Washington, the manner in which it was demonstrated in his own personal habits, through Tuskegee Institute, and through his influence with political, social, and economic leaders of the United States and Europe. He points out also the present predicament of the Negro and attempts to show, with a large degree of success, the meaning of the principles of Washington for the solution of the Negro's present problems.

The book is not simply the history of an individual, but of the progress of the Negro from slavery through emancipation and his efforts to find solutions to his problems through social and educational principles and techniques. Mr. Mathews gives an objective appraisal of the debates of critics who did not see eye to eye with Mr. Washington in his views of interracial harmony and co-operation.

He tells also of Washington's initiative in helping Presidents Roosevelt and Taft to deal with a crisis in Liberia, and of his tour among peasants across Europe which gives a reflection of his world-wide influence.

In this book the writer summarizes the principles for which Washington stood and shows how history attests to their validity. He concludes: "In an America where the rising tide of Negro capacity and the will to freedom are being met by stubborn resistance on the part of many, statesmanship rests with those, white and colored, who take counsel from Booker Washington's farsighted wisdom, and who open the gates of education, industry, social amenities, and self-expression to forces which, if long held back, will break through the dikes, carrying ruin in their train."

Even those who differ with Mr. Mathews' position will find the book a most stimulating and provocative study.

PRINCE A. TAYLOR, JR.

Editor, *The Central Christian Advocate*, New Orleans, Louisiana.

**The Principles of Conduct.** By DANIEL SOMMER ROBINSON. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1948. pp. xviii-420. \$3.25.

Dr. Robinson has written a very useful and lucid textbook in the field of ethics. All his skill as a teacher comes to the foreground in the organization of the materials and the development of the leading ideas. It should prove a valuable aid to the teacher, whether he is offering an elementary course in ethics, or whether he is carrying students through an organized advanced program of reading. The book, as its subtitle suggests, is interested both in the theoretical and the applied aspects of ethics. In both fields the author shows himself to be a master of wide reading and of analytical insight.



The range of theoretical problems dealt with includes a historical approach to the various systems of ethics and a systematic analysis of each main type. The beginning student will appreciate the chapters dealing with rudimentary and comparative ethics and with the ancient codes which lie behind the moral teachings of the great sages. There is a tendency in Dr. Robinson's approach to underrate the permanent value of the great-sage type of morality. Those standing within the tradition of any one of the great sages will feel unhappy about his discussion. Nevertheless, from the standpoint of a scientific ethic, his strictures must be given considerable weight. The various forms of ethical doctrine which he outlines include hedonism, pessimism, naturalism, humanism, intuitionism, formalism, and perfectionism. In each case the student is introduced to the classical literature and the leading ideas of the outstanding exponents of each school of thought. The author's own point of view comes out clearly in Chapter XIII, where he presents "an evaluation of the types." He tries to show how the convergence of the types leads finally to the view of perfectionism, which, as he says, "comes the nearest to being all-inclusive with respect to the five elements of the typical moral situation." But while this type of ethical theory receives his highest praise, he insists that it must be reinterpreted to meet the needs of people of the atomic age. The perfectionism which he expounds has for its objective content much of the ancient Aristotelian doctrine of well being.

Part Two opens with an analysis of the ethical significance of the atomic age. He sketches much of the ethical discussion in contemporary literature, both technical and nontechnical, relating to this problem. In so doing, Dr. Robinson has made a significant contribution. He relates this survey of critical observations to the ethical growth for the atomic age and makes a strong case for a deeper sense of responsibility in the technological sphere. In so doing, he combines social meliorism and theism. Much of Part Two deals with a survey of social ethics related to the great competing social philosophies and ideologies of the present. Some very useful pedagogical tools are introduced to show the relationships of various types of thought and the dominant ideologies. He also pays attention to professional ethics, especially the ethics of business, medicine, and education. There is a brief discussion of sexual behavior and of personal ethics. The book then tackles some of the larger philosophical aspects in ethical order and concludes with his own philosophy of life. There are many teaching aids throughout the book, as well as an excellent index and some interesting appendices. I commend this book to all teachers of ethics.

WALTER G. MUELDER

Dean, Boston University School of Theology, Boston, Massachusetts.

**The Seven Stars.** By TORU MATSUMOTO. New York: The Friendship Press, 1949. pp. x-213. \$2.50 (pap. \$1.00).

This is a charming as well as informative tale, by the author of *A Brother Is a Stranger*, and in some sense a sequel. Seven Japanese schoolboys in 1928 pledged to stick together through life, like the stars of the Great Dipper, and to hold, so far as possible, a reunion each year. Individually different as they were, they lived a variety of lives reflecting all the significant currents in Japanese society through the subsequent twenty years. There was the shy, family-loving small businessman nicknamed "Laughter"; the irresponsible orphan who became a devoted communist and died sacrificially in youth; the Christian, nicknamed "Conscience," his appealing

career and remarkable marriage; the "Admiral" who joined the Navy and gave his life for his country; and the modest, gentle newspaperman who writes the story. The account is necessarily fictionized; but one feels its essential truth, its complete sincerity, its heart-warming pictures of changing Japanese life.

E. H. L.

**Songs From the Land of Dawn.** By TOYOHICO KAGAWA and other Japanese poets. Translated by Lois J. Erickson. New York: The Friendship Press, 1949. pp. xvi-80. \$2.00.

A beautiful book, illustrated by Henry Sugimoto, California-born artist of note. The translator and skilled interpreter, who also translated *Songs of the Slums*, offers forewords to each section. The first section consists of recent prose-poems by Kagawa, filled with sorrow for his people together with triumphant love; Ralph Sockman calls them "the current epistles of a contemporary St. Paul." The second section contains poems of differing types by a devoted group of Christians; the third, selections from Japanese classical poetry—exquisite little *hokku* nature-poems.

"The cunning fireflies,  
Fleeing from the chase,  
Have hidden in the moon!"

E. H. L.

**Christian Unity in the Making.** By Charles S. Macfarland. Harper. \$2.75. The General Secretary Emeritus of the Federal Council has compiled a comprehensive history of that Council. He describes its slow growth for the first twenty-five years (to 1930), shows the Council's wide impact on American Christianity, and also the influence of its experience in forming the World Council of Churches.

**The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches.** Ed. by W. A. Visser 't Hooft. Harper. \$3.50. The official Report on Amsterdam. Volume V of *Man's Disorder and God's Design*.

**Quakers in the Modern World.** By William Wistar Comfort. Macmillan. \$2.50. A highly readable account of the Quaker history and way of life, bringing out their creative approach to contemporary problems.

**Above All Nations.** Ed. by Devere Allen. Harper. \$2.00. 200 true stories of "man's humanity to man" in time of war, first collected by Vera Brittain

et al in England and published there; now amplified from German and American sources. Compassion and imagination in the midst of brutality—moving and occasionally amusing.

**The Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer.** Ed. by Paul Arthur Schilpp. Vol. VI, The Library of Living Philosophers. Evanston, Ill. \$6.00. 23 essays on a German Jewish philosopher: "one of the most venerable figures in recent philosophy, one of the most encyclopedic of modern minds," who "gave profound thought to the whole plight of humanity in all the nations of the world."

**Humanism as a Philosophy.** By Corliss Lamont. Philosophical Library. \$3.75. Traces the history of the humanist idea in philosophy, religion, and literature, and presents it as a fully rounded philosophy of human endeavor "upon this earth and within nature."

**Enriching Worship.** Ed. by A. J. William Myers. Harper. \$3.50. Materials for worship grouped under five types: poetry, "the Psalms for Christian

Worship" (i. e. selected and expurgated), prose, prayers, aphorisms. Thoroughly indexed. A rich collection from a wide range of world literature.

**The Church School Teacher's Job.** By Mildred Moody Eakin and Frank Eakin. Macmillan. \$2.75. An excellent treatment by well-known masters in the field; "the church-school teacher's job is presented as immensely satisfying."

**The Cost of Discipleship.** By Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Macmillan. \$2.50. "Bonhoeffer was a very sophisticated theologian . . . but . . . this book reveals with what simplicity and profundity he grasped the real imperatives of the Christian life . . . the testament of one of the true martyr spirits of our day."—Reinhold Niebuhr's preface.

**The Best of Alexander Maclaren.** Ed. by Gaius Glenn Atkins. Harper. \$2.00. "Opinion seems agreed that Alexander Maclaren was one of the noblest and most prolific preachers of all time." Sermons, meditations, and pulpit prayers, and biographical sketch.

**One Man's Testimony.** By Norman Goodall. Independent Press, London. 6s. This small book by the Secretary of the I.M.C. in London "tries to say not how I have kept hold on the Faith but how the Faith has kept its hold on me through two world wars and their aftermath."

**William Paton.** By Margaret Sinclair. S.C.M. 15s. A biography of a great world-churchman who at the time of his death was joint secretary of the I.M.C. and of the embryo World Council.

**The Personality of Jesus.** By Wallace Deane. Epworth. 7/6. An attempt to analyze the personality of Jesus from the standpoint of modern psychology, but acknowledging at the end his inexplicable mystery.

**Man's Restless Search.** By Barbara Spofford Morgan. Harper. \$2.50. "Dr. Morgan, herself a philosopher, makes the philosophy of religion real and understandable—a threefold search of head, heart, and hand."

**The Life of God in the Soul of Man.** By Henry Scougal. Westminster. \$1.50. A seventeenth-century letter to a friend which became a classic of Christian devotion. Historical introduction by Winthrop S. Hudson.

**Ablaze Yet Not Consumed.** By D. Johnston Martin. Lutterworth. 8/6. A brief account of the leaders of the Reformation and the origins of the Presbyterian Church.

**Men Working.** By Ralph A. Felton. Madison, N. J. (Drew). 30¢ (pap.) quantity rates. A study of voluntary contributions of labor to the church. Information secured from pastors of 341 rural churches, twenty-three denominations. Illustrated.

**The Church Builder.** By Elbert M. Conover. Interdenominational Bureau of Architecture, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York City. \$2.75. "A Complete Guide for the Church Building or Improvement Program."

**The Church School and Parish House Building.** By Elbert M. Conover. I.C.R.E., Chicago, and I. B. of A., New York City. \$1.50 (pap.). Both books, with illustrations and plans, are invaluable aids to planners in the local community.

**Japan Begins Again.** By William C. Kerr. Friendship Press. \$1.50 (pap. \$1.00). Basic studybook for adult church groups. The author, many years a missionary and now advisor on religious affairs to occupation officials in Tokyo, analyzes the causes of Japan's fall and now finds much ground for hope.

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